



# THE INDEPENDENT

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# Embassies under siege as Kurds orchestrate Europe-wide protest

ENRAGED KURDISH protesters were occupying a dozen Greek and Kenyan missions in London and elsewhere across Europe last night, after Turkey captured and brought home from Nairobi the fugitive Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan.

Last night more than 80 Kurds had stormed and taken control of the Greek embassy in London's Holland Park, as hundreds maintained a tense stand-off with the police outside. A 15-year-old girl set fire to her hair and was taken to hospital with burns.

Necla Kanpeper, 15, was saved by police who managed to use their jackets to put out the flames. Kurds inside the embassy told *The Independent* by telephone that if the police tried to force the situation, they would commit suicide. "All of us are ready to die," one said.

In Ankara, Bulent Ecevit, the Prime Minister, told his countrymen that Mr Ocalan, wanted as a traitor and a terrorist for his part in a 14-year civil war which has taken 29,000 lives, had been brought back from Kenya and was behind bars. "We promised the state would capture him wherever he went, and we have kept our promise," he said.

But even before Mr Ecevit made his announcement, Kurdish exiles had started a precisely orchestrated pre-dawn occupation of embassies and consulates, after Greeks had announced that Mr Ocalan, who could face the death penalty in Turkey, was in Kenyan hands. The order seems to have been issued by the high command of Mr Ocalan's Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).

Some 25 European countries were caught up in the protest. Several had refused to allow their plane to land on 1 February as the Kurdish leader, expelled from Italy, sought sanctuary. By evening, missions in France, Russia and elsewhere had been evacuated, either voluntarily or by force. But in Britain, Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland, tension was rising.

In the Hague about 150 Kurds stormed the Greek embassy residence, taking hostage the ambassador's wife, his eight-year-old son and a Filipino servant. In Zurich, demonstrators stormed into the Greek

BY JUSTIN HUGGLER  
in Istanbul,  
PAUL WOOD in Athens  
and ANDREW BUNCOMBE

consulate, taking hostage two people.

Yesterday's events will have

an impact on the allied war of

attrition against President Sad-

dam Hussein, on ever fraught

relations between Greece and

Turkey, on Ankara's ties with

the European Union, and on the

struggle of 20 million Kurds

spread among Turkey, Iran,

Iraq and Syria to forge an in-

dependent country.

Mystery surrounds the cir-

cumstances of Mr Ocalan's re-

capture. According to the Greek Foreign Minister, Theodoros Pangalos, the Kurdish leader had flown to Kenya on a private plane on 2 February after a refuelling stop on the Greek island of Corfu. There he stayed incognito at a Greek embassy building until Monday when he left his own accord and went with the Kenyan authorities to the airport expecting to fly to the Netherlands. Instead he found himself on a plane for Turkey, where he arrived at 3am yesterday.

But the Kenyans said they had nothing to do with the in-

cident, while one of Mr Ocalan's lawyers said he was dragged out. In Washington, a spokes-

man for the Clinton adminis-

tration, which is desperate to

retain Turkey's backing for its

pressure on Saddam Hussein,

said the US had no "direct

involvement".

Diplomats in Athens painted

a picture of a Greek operation

to take charge of Mr Ocalan's future, which had

gone badly wrong, with Athens

being fooled into handing the

PKK leader into the arms of his

captors. That line held for a few

hours until the Turks an-

nounced they had Mr Ocalan.

Mr Pangalos was forced to

admit the PKK leader was

being escorted to the airport in

Nairobi by Greek officials when

his car "disappeared" down a

side street. Mr Pangalos

warned that if the violence did

not cease, "serious measures"

would be taken against the

PKK.

The president of the Kurdish

parliament in exile, Yasser

Kaya, issued an appeal for the

action to stop, but to no effect.

Wave of attacks, Page 3



Necla Kanpeper, aged 15, who set herself on fire outside the Greek embassy in London

Richard Lewis



THE MAIN FLASHPOINTS

**The Hague:** 150 Kurds storm Greek ambassador's residence, taking family hostage  
**Zurich:** Demonstrators force way into Greek consulate, taking two hostages  
**Paris:** Police eject protesters (above) from Kenyan embassy and Greek consulate  
**Strasbourg:** Police fire teargas at 30 protesters inside Greek consulate  
**Marseille:** Dozens of protesters forced out of Greek consulate  
**Bonn:** Hostages held in Kenyan and Greek embassies  
**Ljubljana:** Three held in Greek consulate  
**Stuttgart:** 27 arrested after storming Greek embassy. Woman sets herself on fire  
**Copenhagen:** Woman sets herself on fire at the Greek embassy. 48 protesters occupy consulate  
**Hamburg:** Protesters gather in front of Greek and British consulates  
**Cologne:** More than 30 arrested trying to occupy the Greek consulate  
**Dusseldorf:** Demonstrators attack Greek consulate

**Hanover:** About 15 protesters occupy the Greek consulate and throw missiles at police  
**Moscow:** Demonstrators occupying Greek embassy give themselves up to police

**London:** A woman sets herself alight as about 80 Kurdish demonstrators occupying the Greek embassy

**Brussels:** About 50 protesters occupy Greek embassy and douse themselves with petrol

**Vienna:** Greek and Kenyan embassies stormed

**Geneva:** More than 20 demonstrators enter a UN building

**Berlin:** Demonstrators force way into Greek embassy. Woman sets herself on fire

**Copenhagen:** Woman sets herself on fire at the Greek embassy. 48 protesters held

**Stockholm:** 50 pro-Kurdish demonstrators arrested after scuffles at Greek embassy.

**Milan:** 20 Kurds force their way into Greek consulate.

**Yerevan:** Kurdish protesters occupy UN office in Armenian capital

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The real issues are the impact on the environment and the food chain. Until a few weeks ago the Tories thought GM stood for 'General Motors', he said.  
 Lord Sainsbury announced his public consultation on biosciences on 15 December, though a similar exercise had begun under his predecessor, John Battle. Its advisory committee included Alison Austin, from Sainsbury's, as well as scientists and a biotechnology company, though the DTI said he had been appointed by Mr Battle.  
 The exercise would explore the implications of progress in the biosciences. Lord Sainsbury's press release said: "Our long-term aim is to build public confidence in the Government's use of scientific information and know-how," he said.  
 In addition to his supermarket interests, Lord Sainsbury gave financial backing to two biotechnology companies, Diatech and Innotech Investments. Yesterday he denied a report that he owned the patent for the cauliflower mosaic virus, the gene at the centre of the current food row, but said he did own another GM patent on a product called a translator enhancer. All the interests had been placed in his blind trust.

Scientists' scorn, page 4  
 Parliament, page 8  
 Leading Article, page 3

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## Sainsbury had official GM food role

BY FRAN ABRAMS  
Westminster Correspondent

modified crops, genetic testing and cloning. In December, Lord Sainsbury chaired a conference on it attended by groups including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. Earlier this month he took part in a debate on the exercise in a cabinet subcommittee on biotechnology.

John Redwood, the Conservative trade and industry spokesman, said Lord Sainsbury should resign. "He has a lot of explaining to do. A minister either has to sell all his shares or avoid contact with issues related to them. When is this minister going to obey the rules?" he said.

The Prime Minister, Tony

LORD SAINSBURY  
BEST BEFORE 15/2/99

Tim

LORD SAINSBURY

BEST BEFORE 15/2/99

LORD SAINSBURY



IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

## I made my brother a promise on his deathbed. Now I don't know if I can keep it

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE'S DILEMMAS

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, MARK STEEL, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, SUSANNAH FRANKEL, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, DEBORAH ORR, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILES KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITTEAM SMITH

**FILM**  
ANTHONY QUINN ON 'AFFLICITION'  
**PLUS LAW AND EDUCATION**

# Trimble fights off rebellion as vote is split

DAVID TRIMBLE, the Ulster Unionist leader, successfully held his party together yesterday as the Northern Ireland assembly finally accepted a report on the future shape of government of the province.

Only one of his 30 backbenchers voted against the motion, which was passed by the large majority of 77 votes to 29. The scene is now set for a showdown on the issue of arms decommissioning, which must be settled before the new administration comes into being.

Among Unionist assembly members the vote was split evenly at 29-29. While this clearly does not represent a comfortable lead for Mr Trimble, most of his supporters viewed the outcome as at least a victory of sorts.

A second backbencher, Roy Beggs Jr, had vacillated on his voting intentions but in the end took the party line. In doing so he apparently shrugged off the influence of his father, who is an MP and a strong opponent of the Good Friday Agreement.

Mr Beggs Jr said that while he had reservations, he had received concrete assurances on the decommissioning issue from Mr Trimble. He added:

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK  
Ireland Correspondent

"Public opinion across the British Isles is solid on this issue. Unreconstructed terrorists cannot sit in a democratic government."

After the vote the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, is technically in the position of being able to announce the formation of a new executive.

In political terms, however, this must await a new measure of agreement on the decommissioning issue.

This view was endorsed yesterday by the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, in the latest of his sometimes confusing statements on decommissioning. He told the Dail in Dublin: "The political reality is that we cannot get to the position of setting up an executive - which we desperately need to do, and we are getting to a situation that is getting more desperate every day - without finding a compromise."

The even 29-29 split among unionist assembly members denied the Rev Ian Paisley the chance to argue that Mr Trimble's stance was supported by only a minority within unionism.

Although the result brought

no loss of moral authority for the Ulster Unionist leader, it is plain enough that he kept his supporters on board by assuring them yet again that he could secure actual decommissioning from the IRA, or alternatively could form a new executive without Sinn Fein.

The republican refusal to decommission, on the other hand, remains as implacable as ever, which means a tough period of negotiation lies ahead.

Gerry Adams said last night the transfer of powers to the Assembly would lead to a breakthrough over IRA arms decommissioning. The Sinn Fein president was speaking after a meeting at Downing Street with Tony Blair to keep up the momentum towards the 10 March deadline for transferring powers to the Assembly.

Mr Adams rejected the Unionist demands for decommissioning before sitting in the executive. He said that the transfer of powers would be the key to resolving the impasse.

"My view is that if the two governments keep to the agreement and the parties keep to the agreement, while it will be difficult, this issue can be resolved," he said.



The Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, holding a grenade pin used in an attack on a Catholic pub in Co Armagh 10 days ago, after he met Tony Blair in 10 Downing Street yesterday

Michael Stephens/PA

## 'Save duty free' campaign dealt blow by EU report

BY COLIN BROWN  
AND STEPHEN CASTLE

THE EUROPEAN Commission will deliver a blow today to the campaign to save duty-free sales by disputing claims from the European Union's biggest members that abolition will cause massive job losses.

Drafts of a report, prepared by commission officials, conclude that an extension to duty-free sales would produce "both economic and legal obstacles" and would be a "disproportionate answer to the identified problem".

Ferry companies have

been lost and fares would rise if they lose their unique trading advantage of duty-free sales.

The campaign to save duty-free sales was taken up by the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott. It was supported by Germany and France but Brussels commissioners are today expected to reject extension

after a review by officials and a report by Mario Monti, the commissioner for the internal market.

It could bring an end to duty-free sales from 1 July. A senior commission source said Britain would need unanimous backing to overturn the earlier commission decision to stop duty

free sales, and that was unlikely. Denmark is believed to be holding out against pressure from the campaigners, and Belgium is also among those classed as "doubtful".

Mr Prescott said last night that Britain attached "the highest political importance" to getting a better successor regime, "he said.

"We must look carefully at this new report from Commissioner Monti but if it does not offer an extension of duty free it does not go far enough. We are looking both for a significant extension to the current arrangements and urgent work to develop a better successor regime," he said.

The decision will be a blow for Tony Blair, who wrote to European leaders urging them to support the campaign. The supporters warned that unless ferry companies were allowed to continue making profits from duty-free trade they may have to raise prices by at least 10 per cent. Air fares could also be affected.

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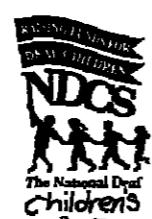
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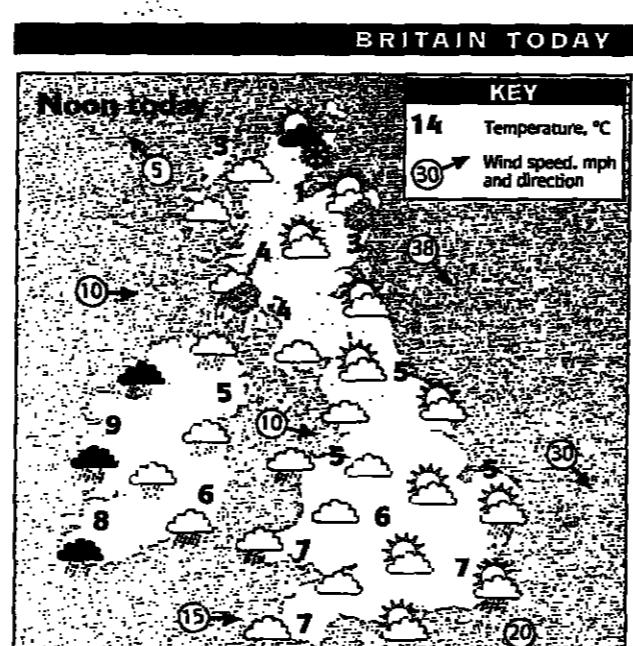
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### FORECAST

General situation: Southern and eastern England will start chilly with sunny breaks and showers. Towards midday, rain will arrive in Wales and western England, with snow over northern hills. Cloud will then spread east bringing rain and sleet to the rest of the country by 2pm. Cloud will start frosty but gradually sunny with snow shown in the north-east. Rain and sleet will then turn to rain. Northern Ireland will have rain, possibly preceded by sleet, before turning much milder.

SE England, London, E Anglia, & N/E England: Cold with sunny spells and showers. Rain and sleet later. A fresh north-westerly wind. Max temp 6-9°C (43-46°F).

West England, Wales, NW & Coast N England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man: Rain from midday onwards, preceded by snow over northern hills. A light to moderate west to north-westerly wind. Max temp 6-9°C (43-46°F).

NI Ireland: Early sleet and rain turning to rain, the rain becoming heavier this afternoon. Wind will turn to north-westerly with a moderate west to north-westerly wind. Max temp 3-5°C (37-41°F).

SE Scotland, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Wales: A frosty but bright start. Cloud increasing soon bringing sleet and snow from the west, turning to rain. A fresh west to north-westerly wind. Max temp 3-5°C (37-41°F).

NE Scotland, Aberdeen, N.I. Ices very cold and frosty with sunny spells and heavy snow showers. A strong to near-gale force north-westerly wind. Max temp 0-3°C (32-37°F).

It will turn much milder later tonight leaving tomorrow very mild but mostly cloudy with some drizzle and hill-fog. The north will be wet and windy on Friday. It will then turn drier but brighter. Southern Britain will stay mild but windy with rain towards evening.

### OUTLOOK

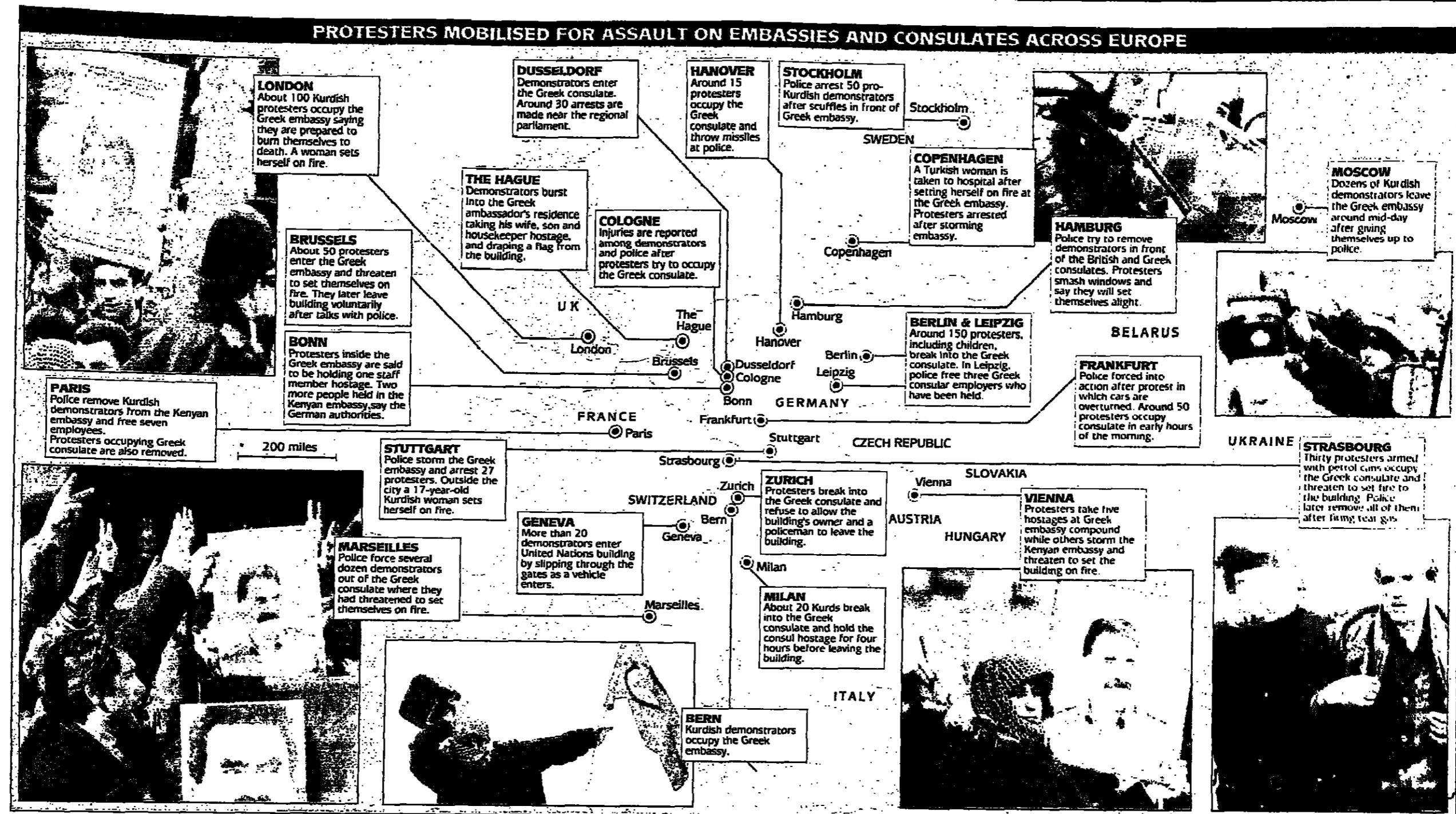
London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Leytonstone. Major roadworks on new M1 link road. Until 31 December.

Coastal areas: A10 between Folkestone and M1. Roadworks on new bridge maintenance work at Sheerness M1. Until 14 February.

Bristol: M5 J18-19. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 23rd June 2001.

Greater Manchester: M62, M6, M621, M622, M623, M624, M625, M626, M627, M628, M629, M6210, M6211, M6212, M6213, M6214, M6215, M6216, M6217, M6218, M6219, M6220, M6221, M6222, M6223, M6224, M6225, M6226, M6227, M6228, M6229, M6230, M6231, M6232, M6233, M6234, M6235, M6236, M6237, M6238, M6239, M6240, M6241, M6242, M6243, M6244, M6245, M6246, M6247, M6248, M6249, M6250, M6251, M6252, M6253, M6254, M6255, M6256, M6257, M6258, M6259, M6260, M6261, M6262, M6263, M6264, M6265, M6266, M6267, M6268, M6269, M6270, M6271, M6272, M6273, M6274, M6275, M6276, M6277, M6278, M6279, M6280, M6281, M6282, M6283, M6284, M6285, M6286, M6287, M6288, M6289, M6290, M6291, M6292, M6293, M6294, M6295, M6296, M6297, M6298, M6299, M62100, M62101, M62102, M62103, M62104, M62105, M62106, M62107, M62108, M62109, M62110, M62111, M62112, M62113, M62114, M62115, M62116, M62117, M62118, M62119, M62120, M62121, M62122, M62123, M62124, M62125, M62126, M62127, M62128, M62129, M62130, M62131, M62132, M62133, M62134, M62135, M62136, M62137, M62138, M62139, M62140, M62141, M62142, M62143, M62144, M62145, M62146, M62147, M62148, M62149, M62150, M62151, M62152, M62153, M62154, M62155, M62156, M62157, M62158, M62159, M62160, M62161, M62162, M62163, M62164, M62165, M62166, M62167, M62168, M62169, M62170, M62171, M62172, M62173, M62174, M62175, M62176, M62177, M62178, M62179, M62180, M62181, M62182, M62183, M62184, M62185, M62186, M62187, M62188, M62189, M62190, M62191, M62192, M62193, M62194, M62195, M62196, M62197, M62198, M62199, M62200, M62201, M62202, M62203, M62204, M62205, M62206, M62207, M62208, M62209, M62210, M62211, M62212, M62213, M62214, M62215, M62216, M62217, M62218, M62219, M62220, M62221, M62222, M62223, M62224, M62225, M62226, M62227, M62228, M62229, M62230, M62231, M62232, M62233, M62234, M62235, M62236, M62237, M62238, M62239, M62240, M62241, M62242, M62243, M62244, M62245, M62246, M62247, M62248, M62249, M62250, M62251, M62252, M62253, M62254, M62255, M62256, M62257, M62258, M62259, M62260, M62261, M62262, M62263, M62264, M62265, M62266, M62267, M62268, M62269, M62270, M62271, M62272, M62273, M62274, M62275, M62276, M62277, M62278, M62279, M62280, M62281, M62282, M62283, M62284, M62285, M62286, M62287, M62288, M62289, M62290, M62291, M62292, M62293, M62294, M62295, M62296, M62297, M62298, M62299, M62300, M62301, M62302, M62303, M62304, M62305, M62306, M62307, M62308, M62309, M62310, M62311, M62312, M62313, M62314, M62315, M62316, M62317, M62318, M62319, M62320, M62321, M62322, M62323, M62324, M62325, M62326, M62327, M62328, M62329, M62330, M62331, M62332, M62333, M62334, M62335, M62336, M62337, M62338, M62339, M62340, M62341, M62342, M62343, M62344, M62345, M62346, M62347, M62348, M62349, M62350, M62351, M62352, M62353, M62354, M62355, M62356, M62357, M62358, M62359, M62360, M62361, M62362, M62363, M62364, M62365, M62366, M62367, M62368, M62369, M62370, M62371, M62372, M62373, M62374, M62375, M62376, M62377, M62378, M62379, M62380, M62381, M62382, M62383, M62384, M62385, M62386, M62387, M62388, M62389, M62390, M62391, M62392, M62393, M62394, M62395, M62396, M62397, M62398, M62399, M62400, M62401, M62402, M62403, M62404, M62405, M62406, M62407, M62408, M62409, M62410, M62411, M62412, M62413, M62414, M62415, M62416, M62417, M62418, M62419, M62420, M62421, M62422, M62423, M62424, M62425, M62426, M62427, M62428, M62429, M62430, M62431, M62432, M62433, M62434, M62435, M62436, M62437, M62438, M62439, M62440, M62441, M62442, M62443, M62444, M62445, M62446, M62447, M62448, M62449, M62450, M62451, M62452, M62453, M62454, M62455, M62456, M62457, M62458, M62459, M62460, M62461, M62462, M62463, M62464, M62465, M62466, M62467, M62468, M62469, M62470, M62471,

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cancer



## Hour by hour, a new Kurd attack

BY KIM SENGUPTA

THE CALLS began within hours of the news that Abdullah Ocalan had been arrested. They started after a meeting of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) in its mountain stronghold in the borderlands of Iraq and Iran and fanned out through Madrid, Rome, Paris, London, Bonn and Moscow.

At 4.30pm yesterday outside the Greek embassy in Holland Park, London, Necla Kanepen, 15, doused herself in petrol and set herself alight while shouting slogans of Kurdish freedom. As she was taken away on a stretcher, badly burnt, she gave a victory sign. The crowd cheered.

The hours between the call to mobilise and Necla's self-immolation was a demonstration of the power of the Kurds' network. Across Europe buildings were stormed and occupied, demonstrators set themselves on fire and there were battles with police. The raids had the precision of military operations. On Monday

At 1.30am in The Hague the wife of the Greek ambassador to the Netherlands was asleep at home with the couple's eight-year-old son and a Filipina maid when they were awoken by glass and breaking doors as protesters burst in.

As police went to the house the Kurdish flag, bearing a portrait of Mr Ocalan, was hung out of the window. In the next few hours hundreds more Kurds gathered, trying to force their way in and being beaten back by riot police.

At 2.50am, at the Greek embassy in Park Road, Holland Park, the caretaker, Babis Patrinos, was awoken by the front door being smashed. Scotland

Yard's Royal and Diplomatic Protection Group officers arrived with other colleagues and set in motion a plan honed over previous stages.

Over the next few hours similar scenes were played out in more than 20 cities across Europe. In Geneva, at 4.30am, 50 Kurds slipped through a side-door at the Palais des Nations, the UN's European headquarters, and overpowered the only guard. A UN spokeswoman said the protesters "were probably armed" and demands had been issued for the freeing of Mr Ocalan. She said no such assurance could be given and the Kurds were being asked to leave.

But instead of leaving, other Kurds smashed their way into the Greek embassy in the Swiss capital, Berne, and the consulate in Zurich, where they took hostage the consulate's owner and a policeman who tried to negotiate.

From then on every hour brought a fresh assault on a

diplomatic building. They were not always Greek. Kenya is also seen by the Kurds as culpable in Mr Ocalan's arrest and in Paris police ejected protesters who had taken over the Kenyan embassy. The nonsense approach of the French was also in evidence in Strasbourg, where they fired teargas into the occupied Greek consulate and retok it, holding 30 Kurds. They used the same tactics to recapture the Greek consulate in Marseilles.

The Kenyan embassy in Vienna was stormed at 8.30am. Three hours earlier a group broke into the Greek legation, taking hostage the ambassador, Ioannis Yenimatas, his wife, and three embassy staff.

In Germany, which has the largest Kurdish population in Europe, the Kenyan embassy in Bonn was occupied and two staff held. Another staffer at the Greek embassy was held hostage. Kurds occupied consulates or held protests in Leipzig, Stuttgart, Frankfurt,

Hamburg, Berlin, Cologne, Dusseldorf and Hanover.

The reaction of the governments on the receiving end of the raids was mostly bewilderment. They were caught on the hop. Greece said it was furious and threatened "merciless" retribution. Dozens of Kurds were rounded up and jailed in Greek cities.

Through its political wing, ERNK, PKK leaders said the operations were a spontaneous act of popular anger

over which they had no control. But the plans were laid before Mr Ocalan arrived in Turkey yesterday morning, and when it was still believed he was in Kenya. The protests were organised on Monday night, in what turned out to be a failed last-ditch attempt to press Greece not to hand him to the Ankara government.

In Germany, as the siege continued, the Foreign Office said the matter was "essentially between Turkish and Kenyan au-

thorities". Although "Ocalan has apparently renounced violence, there is still substantial evidence of recent violent terrorist activities by the PKK".

The Kurds in the embassy retorted that, if necessary, they would kill themselves in trying to free their leader. During the day it became clear this was no empty threat.

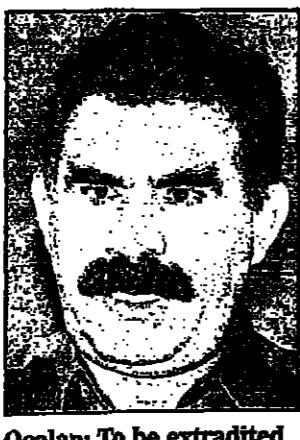
In Stuttgart a 17-year-old Kurd received serious burns after dousing herself in petrol. In Copenhagen another woman

was critically ill, also after self-immolation.

News of events around Europe filtered back to the crowd at the London embassy. Bottles were thrown and barriers kicked down. Negotiations were going on with those inside the embassy. It was then that Necla Kanepen poured petrol over herself and set herself on fire. Her mother said: "She did it in protest at the totally unjustified British and world stance on the Kurdish issue."

## Psychopathic killer who is great hope of a nation

BY ROBERT FISK  
Middle East Correspondent



Ocalan: To be extradited

is a broader, far more important context to the capture of Abdullah Ocalan – a story of American intrigue, Kurdish betrayal and superpower support for the Muslim nation. Turkey, which has become Israel's newest ally in the Middle East.

Yesterday's seizure of the Kurds' most radical leader is likely to lead to much further violence: to the hijacking of Turkish aircraft, to attacks on Turkish embassies and diplomats – as the Turks are themselves well aware.

But it also raises questions about the policies of the United States towards Kurdistan's 20 million people, the largest nation in the world without a state. Only a month ago, the United States, whose CIA mission in northern Iraq was destroyed by President Saddam

Hussein in 1996, was trying yet again to create an anti-Saddam alliance between the two more parochial Kurdish leaders, Massoud Barzani of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

After their visit to Washington Barzani, whose movement collaborated with Saddam to destroy the PUK three years ago, and Talabani, whose support from Iran gave Barzani an excuse for seeking his overthrow, are now – more or less – on board the latest US campaign to overthrow the Beast of Baghdad.

With very good reason, Turkey was deeply troubled at this latest alliance. If Barzani and Talabani were ever to create an embryo Kurdish state in northern Iraq, the threat of a much larger Kurdish entity – including parts of Turkey, Syria and Iran as well as Iraq – would appear greater. The Turks were thus very suspicious of Washington's latest "peace-making".

If the western Allies had offered independence to the Arabs who overthrew their mutual enemies (the Ottoman Empire) in the First World War, why shouldn't Washington offer independence to the Kurds if they helped to topple Saddam?

How could Turkey show its anger? One way: to invite a senior Iraqi official to Ankara to discuss a withdrawal of Turkish landing rights for US and British fighter-bombers at the Incirlik and Batman airbases in southern Turkey – the very air-



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# Scientists pour scorn on food scare

THE SCIENTIST at the centre of the furor over genetically modified (GM) food broke his silence yesterday to say he was sure his fears about it would be proved correct.

Less than two hours after a gagging order on him was lifted, Dr Árpád Pusztai reiterated his fears about transgenic potatoes he had used in experiments on rats. "I would not eat them," he said. His work is now being submitted for review by independent scientists, who will inform the Government whether it has any merit. Previously Dr Pusztai had claimed, through intermediaries, that the Rowett Institute in Aberdeen, where he had carried out the work, was suppressing his results.

Yesterday, the Rowett announced that it would publish the results and pass them for independent examination to the Royal Societies in London and Edinburgh.

Since being forced to retire last August, after the rat experiments were discredited by an investigation at the institute, Dr Pusztai, 68, has suffered a heart attack and been under a legal ban preventing him discussing the matter publicly.

In a statement yesterday, the Rowett said: "Dr Pusztai has been repeatedly requested to provide papers for publication on all his work. He has not yet done so." It added: "The institute can no longer be responsible for his analyses or views."

Meanwhile, leading British experts in plant science launched a withering attack on Dr Pusztai's work with rats fed

BY CHARLES ARTHUR  
AND STEVE CONNOR

GM potatoes, some of which had had lectins - a potential toxin - added separately.

The results were a "red herring", said a panel of scientists from universities and publicly funded research institutes, and should not be used as an excuse for a moratorium on the development and growth of transgenic crops. One of the panel accused Dr Pusztai of double standards, pointing out that he had applied for a biotechnology patent on a plant protein, and had claimed in other studies that the same lectins used in the Rowett experiment could benefit health.

"The gentleman wants it both sides," said Professor Christopher Leaver, head of the plant science department at Oxford University. "The experiments from what I know of them were rather muddled. We must not generalise from a simple lab-based experiment."

Supporters of Dr Pusztai have claimed that the results of his rat feeding experiments indicate that the "gene switch" used in the process - called a cauliflower mosaic virus promoter - may stunt the growth and immune system.

However, Professor Leaver said the cauliflower mosaic virus is ubiquitous and everyone has eaten it many times with their food. "It's the most widespread gene promoter in science and there is very little doubt it is safe," he said.

Ray Baker, chief executive of the Biotechnology and Biolog-

ical Sciences Research Council, said Dr Pusztai's views were unrepresentative and that there are thousands of scientists who would support the potential benefits of GM food and crops.

He said it was important "to reject the idea that scientists are speaking with different voices" on an issue that has generated 25,000 field trials in 45 countries involving 60 different plant species. Professor Don Grivell, a geneticist at Nottingham University whose work led to the first GM tomato, said his findings had meant less waste and a better product. "It's wrong to say it's Frankenstein food," he said.

Claims that GM food is not thoroughly tested were also attacked by Mike Gasson, head of genetics and microbiology at the Institute of Food Research in Norwich. The tests on GM food cover nutritional value, potential toxicity, the unwitting transfer of genes from one organism to another and the concern over possible secondary effects of genetic modification. "All of those issues are very rigorously assessed... and nothing in the marketplace now is in anyway unsafe," said Dr Gasson.

■ A coalition of 29 consumer development, health and environment organisations called for a five-year ban on commercial growing of GM foods for commercial purposes yesterday. "The Government seems to be deaf to all but a few carefully selected commercially based opinions," said the campaign coordinator, Sandra Bell.

"Safety" a priority, page 8



GM food opponents highlight their fears with a display of a giant ice cube containing five 'mutated' fish in London yesterday Philip Meech

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## No reason for beef ban says adviser

BY PAUL WAUGH  
Political Correspondent

THERE ARE no scientific grounds for retaining the beef-on-the-bone ban, the government's Chief Scientific Adviser said yesterday.

Sir Robert May announced that there was "not much of a case" for the ban and claimed that it was politics rather than hard evidence that had persuaded ministers to keep it in place.

Sir Robert's comments contradicted the Minister of Agriculture, Nick Brown, who decided to extend the ban by six months on the grounds of scientific advice and because the need to protect public health was "paramount".

Mr Brown infuriated farmers but claimed that he had to follow the advice, revealed in *The Independent*, of the Chief Medical Officer, Liam Donaldson, that there was still a small risk of BSE remaining in beef on the bone.

"But you have to see it in a much wider context of the past history, particularly in Europe," he added.

The Shadow trade and industry secretary, John Redwood, said that Sir Robert's comments proved the "humbug" of the Government's stance.

Demos said it was time

for the Government to stop using "pseudo science" and allow consumers to make up their own mind about beef on the bone and genetically modified foods.

"Whether the decision is scientific or political, the fact is that the ban has not been lifted yet. In term of our members this may cause concern but to a certain extent it doesn't matter what the reason is."

A leading Blairite think-tank claimed last night that the beef-on-the-bone ban may have been motivated as much by the demands of Europe after the BSE-crisis as by concern for human health.

Demos said it was time for the Government to stop using "pseudo science" and allow consumers to make up their own mind about beef on the bone and genetically modified foods.

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# Attack on Oftel's number changes

THE TELEPHONE watchdog Oftel came in for fierce criticism yesterday for proposing yet another change to the numbering system.

It was accused of failing to put customers first and of being too easily swayed by phone companies' claims of technical difficulties with the existing numbers.

MPs said that Oftel should review the phone numbering scheme "so that in future the scheme puts customers' interests first". Plans to change phone numbers are due to be implemented in July.

Customers in Cardiff, Coventry, London, Portsmouth, Southampton and Northern Ireland will have to change their numbers under the scheme.

The overhaul comes just four years after Phoneday, when numbers across the UK were altered by adding an extra 1 into every area code. Such changes are inconvenient for residential users and hit businesses with extra costs for publicising their new numbers.

The report by the Trade and Industry select committee said that Oftel had failed to consider alternatives to another upheaval and did not ask customers for their views. "We recommend that when Oftel next proposes changes to geographic codes, residential and business customers in each of the areas affected are directly consulted," the report said.

Businesses that now use the freephone 0800 system are furious about the new system, which will see all such numbers changed.

Many companies have spent thousands of pounds promoting their easy-to-remember numbers, which will have to be changed. The cost to business of the swap has been estimated

BY SARAH SCHAEFER  
Political Reporter

ed at £500m. The committee said it was "totally unconvinced" by Oftel's arguments for the need to change freephone numbers.

It added that it was left with the impression that freephone changes were a "smokescreen" to allow Oftel to take control of the most valuable numbers, which it could then auction to companies.

Oftel's director-general, David Edmonds, responded firmly to this last accusation, arguing that Oftel's primary aim was to ensure sufficient capacity on the telephone network. Mr Edmonds also said the changes to area codes were essential.

"If these code changes do not take place as planned, London and perhaps other cities will run out of telephone number capacity by summer 2000. It is highly unlikely, therefore, that significant change can or should be made to what is now known as The Big Number campaign."

On 0800 numbers, Oftel said it had held discussion with the Freephone Users Group and would look at new suggestions, which could allow some free-phone users to continue to use their existing numbers.

The Freephone Users Group itself praised the MPs' report. Its chairman, John Chaplin, said: "We have waged a six-month campaign to make Oftel see sense. This report must help Oftel realise that its ideas were and always have been flawed."

"We should now draw a line under this unfortunate episode and move forward with Oftel to achieve a solution that benefits business, the consumer, network operators and the UK as a whole."



Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart of the Eurythmics reformed to accept their award



Prize winners the Manic Street Preachers and Natalie Imbruglia

## Robbie Williams is the angel of the Brits

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

ROBBIE WILLIAMS won three awards last night at The Brits - the biggest event in the rock and pop calendar. The former *Take That* singer made a spectacular entrance at the start of the ceremony, coming on to the stage on a rope.

The Manic Street Preachers won both the best group and best album awards; and there were two awards also for the Australian singer Natalie Imbruglia, voted best international newcomer and best international female artist.

The Eurythmics - Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart - reformed to play a set at the show's climax after receiving the outstanding achievement award.

In an evening at the London Arena in Docklands glittering with celebrities, and cabinet ministers, the focal point of the show was a political one - the launch of "Drop the Debt", the music industry campaign, revealed in *The Independent* last week, to persuade world leaders to write off Third World debt.

The campaign was launched by the rock star Bono, of U2. In an emotional moment he presented an award to the former world heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali, who has been an international ambassador for the Jubilee 2000 campaign to cancel unpayable debt.

Ali had said earlier: "Noth-

ing is more important to the poorest nations of Africa and Latin America than to be able to keep more of what they earn and invest it in their people and the lives and well-being of their children. I support Jubilee 2000's efforts to bring the issue of debt relief to the attention of the world."

Fatboy Slim, whose alter ego Norman Cook is marrying the Radio One presenter Zoe Ball, was voted best dance act, and The Corrs were best international group.

There was a further prize for the award-laden *Titanic*, which won best film soundtrack. Des'Ree was best British female artist, and Beck best male international artist. Indie band Belle and Sebastian, highly popular on the college circuit, won the best British newcomer award.

Robbie Williams' awards came for best British male artist, best video for his song "Millennium", and best single for "Angels".

There was surprisingly no award, despite three nominations, for Gomez, the band that won the Mercury Music Prize last year.

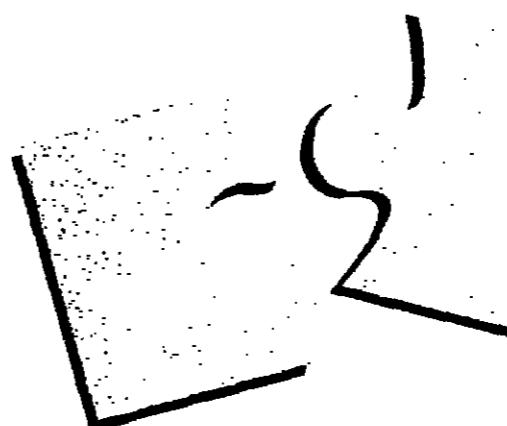
Other familiar names who missed out last night were Catatonia and Massive Attack, and in the international section Madonna and Alanis Morissette.

Some of the biggest names in British pop - such as the Spice Girls and Oasis - did not receive nominations because their albums were released outside the qualifying period.

The tragic groupies, Review page 4

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Exhausted runners gather after the world's oldest pancake race in Olney, Buckinghamshire, yesterday. The race, in its 544th year, is entered by women who compete for a kiss from the Pancake Bell ringer

By JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

A REVOLUTION in the way students apply for universities has been proposed by a working group of teachers and academics. Students would apply electronically after they had taken A-levels, instead of being offered places on the basis of grades predicted by teachers.

Such a system has been discussed for years but never put out to consultation before. Previous attempts to introduce change founded on the reluctance of universities to alter terms and the insistence of exam boards that the dates for schools exam results could not be brought forward.

At present, A-level results come out in the third week of August. Under proposals devised by the working party, applicants would express a preference for courses and universities during the previous two terms. They would go to open days and might be inter-

viewed. Exam results would be published about 10 days earlier in August. Students would have a week in which to apply to university and would list their preferences in order. They would be able to make three applications. Universities would in turn rank students in order.

The exercise would be made possible by electronic matching of applicants' choices to university places by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. Students would then have to wait at least 10 days to hear if they had succeeded.

Critics of the existing system say students have difficulty choosing the right course and institution because they pick a list of six universities in December, nine months before they want to go to college. Some do not achieve the ex-

pected grades and about 50,000 people enter the clearing process run by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, which matches students to spare places at the end of August and in September. Equally, some students do better than they expected.

A National Union of Students spokesman said: "The new system would give proper information to students, who could make informed decisions. We hope it will go some way to end the lottery of clearing and should be easier to administer and leave all concerned a lot less paperwork."

Brian Smith, chairman of the working group and vice-chancellor of the University of Wales, said: "While the current system has some faults, it has proved to be generally good. We need to be sure any new system will be a real improvement and will not present

serious practical difficulties in its implementation. Once we have feedback from admissions officers and others we will consider the system further."

Heads are eager for change. John Dunford, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said: "We have been fighting hard to press the case for post-qualification entry to get away from the dependency on predicted grades and the long period between application and admission. I had hoped that the working party would lead to a full consultation of schools and universities rather than the present limited exercise."

The consultation will involve focus groups of admissions officers and schools.

Lord Dearing backed a post-qualification admissions system in his report on higher education and expected that the new arrangements would begin within two years.

## Student admissions revolution planned

## Governors of failing colleges face the sack

By BEN RUSSELL  
Education Correspondent

FAILING COLLEGES that do not improve could be closed under an aggressive drive to raise standards, which is due to be announced today.

Ministers will tell governors they face the sack if they do not hit new targets for improving the worst performers. The tough regime is the most demanding yet to be imposed on further education colleges. George Mudie, an Education minister, is expected to deliver the Government's uncompromising message to the principals and governors of the 446 English colleges at their annual conference today.

The best colleges can expect financial rewards, but there will be "zero tolerance" of those marked down by inspectors. Mr Mudie is expected to tell the conference that some reports "make shocking reading".

"There are some excellent colleges. But there is too much complacency about standards, and there is some outright failure," he will say.

Colleges, which provide academic and vocational courses for about four million people each year, are in the vanguard of Tony Blair's drive to expand access to education and training. As part of this, ministers are determined to cut drop-out rates, as high as 85 per cent on some courses. Absenteeism is another target, with up to 25 per cent of students missing class in some cases.

But Mr Mudie will praise the very best sixth-form and further

education colleges, which produce A-level results on a par with the highest-achieving grammar schools.

Ministers will use a new £115m standards fund to back measures to improve teaching standards and staying-on rates. New regulations giving them the powers to intervene are already in place.

Governors at one of Britain's biggest colleges became the first victims of the clampdown earlier this month when they were forced to resign after receiving unprecedented criticism from the Further Education Funding Council. David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, imposed a new board of governors at the 23,000-student Wirral Metropolitan College after allegations of "mismanagement".

Reports due out at the end of this month are expected to be highly critical of two further colleges, Bilton Community College in Wolverhampton and Matthew Boulton College in Birmingham.

The warning to colleges comes after Mr Blunkett's announcement last year of the biggest expansion yet of sixth-form and further education colleges. But he said the increase must be matched by improved standards. He warned then the Government "will be as tough on failing colleges as we have been on failing schools".

### THE WORST RESULTS

Ranked by percentage of students who gain a qualification at the end of their course.
Hackney Community College - 33%
Barnet College - 34%
Hammersmith and West London College - 36%
Basildon College - 40%
City of Liverpool College - 40%
Stoke on Trent College - 40%
Thomas Danby College - 40%

Source: Confirmed figures from college performance indicators 1998-97.

### IN BRIEF

#### Acid attack conviction upheld

PETER HUMPHREY, 54, jailed for 12 years after setting up an acid attack that left a babysitter disfigured, lost his Court of Appeal claim that his conviction was unsafe. He hired a man to throw acid at his estranged wife in Seaton, Devon. But Beverley Hammatt, 19, opened the door.

#### Girl eats stashed cocaine

A GIRL of three was taken to hospital in Newcastle after eating cocaine hidden by dealers in a discarded refrigerator. She thought it was sherbet and took a lick before running home. She left hospital after treatment.

#### Supermarket offers online love

STAFF AT the Bristol headquarters of Somerfield, the supermarket chain, are being given the chance to fall in love through their own Internet dating page. Somerfield Soul Mates is thought to be a first in the workplace.

#### Crackdown on number plates

DRIVERS WHO customise their number plates to make them difficult to trace risk being fined and having the plates confiscated. The police and the Government will launch a scheme next month to try to combat crime.

#### Teenager killed mother over car

A TEENAGER who killed his mother by clubbing her with a champagne bottle when she would not let him use her car was jailed indefinitely. Simon Geldart, 18, of Darlington, Co Durham, was convicted of murder at Teesside Crown Court.

# Iceland. The only Supermarket in Britain that has banned Frankenstein Food

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So, if the GM food crisis worries you, there is something you can do about it today. Shop with Iceland.

And if the whole issue makes you angry, sign our in-store petition calling for a five year freeze on GM food while you are there.

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For more information on the GM issue or Iceland's stance call our genetic hotline on 0990 133373 or pick up a leaflet in store.

# Group sex film passed by censor

A HIGHLY controversial Danish film in which the characters pretend to be retarded and engage in some of the most explicit sex scenes outside the world of hard-core movies has been cleared for cinema release by the British Board of Film Classification.

The uncut version of Lars Von Trier's *The Idiots*, a comedy about a commune of young people who isolate themselves by pretending to be mentally ill or retarded, features a fleeting sexual penetration scene and erect penises in a group sex sequence. It premiered at last year's Cannes Film Festival on a wave of notoriety about its copious sex and nudity.

Although the sight of penetrative sex and erect penises is not unprecedented in British high street cinemas - the 1991 Japanese film *In the Realm of the Senses* featured both - it is extremely rare.

The other likely area of controversy relates to the depiction of the mentally ill and disabled.

"The conclusion which we



Lars Von Trier insisted on nude days, where the cast, crew and director would all strip off in a bid to return to 'pure cinema' *Re: Features*

BY RHYNS WILLIAMS

relatively swift sanction marks the second significant decision by Robin Duval, who took over as director of the BBFC from James Ferman four weeks ago.

The fact that Mr Duval has wasted little time in both approving *The Idiots* and granting *The Exorcist* a video release will be seen by many in the film industry as evidence of the new regime's determination to act decisively rather than let difficult issues drag on indefinitely, as has happened in the past with films such as *Crash*.

Although the sight of penetrative sex and erect penises is

who are genuinely disabled.

Mr Duval said: "The first issue was whether the film would be offensive to people with genuine disabilities and that required a lot of thought.

"The conclusion which we arrived at was that the approach was sensitive and positive. In no sense was it

insensitive or parodic of people with genuine disabilities."

Sophie Trenchell, managing director of Metro Tartan, said: "The film works as a whole. If you watch it for half-an-hour, you will come away with the wrong impression. The people who pretend to be disabled are revealing their inner idiot. The

film is more about the limitations of middle-class manners. If you are cracking up inside is it more useful to hold it in or let it out? It's about inhibitions, that's why there's so much nudity."

Mr Von Trier has a reputation as an *enfant terrible* of contemporary cinema. He directed

the 1996 film *Breaking the Waves*, which earned an Oscar nomination for the actress Emily Watson and his horror series *The Kingdom* was shown on British television recently.

*The Idiots* is the first product of Dogme 95, directors who agreed to make films under strict rules, including shooting

all scenes on location, using natural light and hand-held cameras. This "vow of chastity" is an attempt, they say, to return to a pure cinema, stripped of technical trickery. During the making of *The Idiots*, Mr Von Trier insisted on nude days when everyone, cast, crew and director, all went naked.

Code on forged art to be issued

BY IAN BURRELL  
Home Affairs Correspondent

A CODE intended to protect art lovers who mistakenly buy forged or stolen works is to be unveiled by the Home Office.

Paul Boateng, minister for Crime Reduction and the Police, will give details next month of a due diligence code, which will help duped buyers to make insurance or compensation claims for works of art that have to be returned to their rightful owners.

The code has been brought in to reform a market that depends largely on cash transactions and which some art experts denounced last night as "medieval". Its introduction follows the jailing this week of John Drewe for masterminding the biggest fraud in contemporary art this century.

Drewe flooded the international art market with works in the style of Alberto Giacometti, Ben Nicholson, Jean Dubuffet and Nicholas de Staél. He went to extraordinary lengths to provide histories or provenances, for his works.

The new code, featured in this week's *Law Society Gazette*, has been drawn up by the Association of Chief Police Officers in conjunction with the Council for the Prevention of Art Theft. It follows a 12-month pilot project.

Under the guidelines, art buyers will be advised to establish the identity and address of the seller and request a "paper trail" of documents to support the artefact's sales history. They will also be advised to make checks with registers of stolen art and pay by cheque.

Robin Fry, a council director, said the code would help to modernise the art market. "At the moment people take more care in buying a lock-up garage in Southend than on the purchase of a piece of art costing £250,000. The art market is still operating the way it did 300 years ago," he said.

## Racist threats drive English family out of Scotland

AN ENGLISH family who moved to Scotland a year ago are packing their bags to return south after enduring what they say has been a year-long stream of racist taunts and attacks. Their two young girls were threatened with having their throats slit and their windows have been smashed.

The last straw for John and

BY STEPHEN GOODWIN  
Scotland Correspondent

it," Mrs Annable, 31, said yesterday. "They were actually out in the street when we got back, laughing about it and shouting, 'F\*\*\* off back to England you English b\*\*\*\*\*s'."

Though the Commission for Racial Equality maintains such extreme anti-English behaviour is rare, there is increasing evidence of an ugly side to the

Scots' rekindled sense of nationhood. The Annable family seems to have been unlucky.

Mrs Annable is half Scottish and the family moved north after she traced her grandmother to Musselburgh. They moved out of their first home in the Granton area of Edinburgh when "racists" smashed every window in the flat.

Mr Annable, 35, disabled since a mining accident 12 years ago, said it started with stones, but in the end their attackers were throwing rocks.

Similar hatred greeted them in Musselburgh. Police were called when eight-year-old Amy was attacked in the street, a window was smashed and eggs thrown at the front of the house.

A car window was broken days before the burglary, in which £20,000 of property was stolen.

His wife claimed the trouble came from just two or three families who were not typical - "they're the scum of the earth" - and a lot of neighbours had been good to them. Mrs Annable, who is a care assistant, said she was too nervous

to go out unless it was to work. "I definitely think the Scottish Parliament has something to do with this," she said.

Inspector Gavin Brist, race relations officer with Lothian and Borders Police, said a correlation had been noticed between the announcement of the Home Rule parliament and anti-English incidents.



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## Tories choke on chance to make a meal of GM panic

IT WAS easy to understand why the geeks and political eggheads in the Tory party backroom thought they would be on to a good thing by exploiting the public panic over genetically modified food.

There was the Prime Minister under pressure, they thought, from all quarters, with the high court of media and public opinion unimpressed by his statements that he eats funny food with relish and lashings of genetically modified tomato to paste. All the political organic ingredients were there for an opposition showstopper: media hysteria, public outrage, ministerial links with supermarkets' profit mo-

tives, sacked scientists, cover-ups and a general feeling of the Government in a mess.

So it was hardly surprising the Tory agriculture spokesman, Tim Yeo, was encouraged to weigh in with a demand for a government emergency statement. Opposition whips had succeeded, for once, in mustering a respectable turn-out and William Hague put in an appearance to encourage Mr Yeo to go over the top. Yet things did not go Mr Yeo's way for long.

The Food minister, Jeff Rooker, bluffed the House with science and bluster and regained the initiative with a bravura performance.

Mr Yeo began by complaining that the Minister of Agriculture, Nick Brown, was absent and that no cabinet minister was present.

He accused the Government of being under pressure from President Bill Clinton and, in a gibe against the DTI minister Lord Sainsbury of Turville, demanded ministers whose independence and integrity could be relied upon.

It should have been an easy ride for Mr Yeo, but his obvious political opportunism shone through too brightly for Mr Rooker to have much difficulty rebutting the assault. His most effective response was a list of genetically modified

products on sale, with dates, under Tory rule, when they were approved. "Tomato paste - approved in 1994; soya beans - 1995; maize -

first approved in 1996-97." Mr Rooker soon got into overdrive, trapping the Tories by saying he genuinely believed "we can say that the public can have confidence in foods placed on sale by ministers in the previous government".

"What about raw potatoes?" shouted a Tory from a sedentary position, in a reference to the alleged findings that have created the current scare. Mr Rooker seized his opportunity with a clever put-down. "My advice on raw potatoes is the same as on raw chicken - don't eat it; don't do it."

His most devastating put-down of the Tories was to remind the

House they had negotiated against other EU member-states' proposals for a food-labelling warning when they were in government.

By now Mr Rooker was in confident mood, aided by the Tory rebel Ian Taylor (Surbiton), who referred to "headless chickens" of the human variety who were a greater threat to the consumer than genetically modified food. Mr Taylor brought common sense to the proceedings by asking the minister to make clear to the public that there is no such thing as safe food.

Mr Rooker was on a roll and seized the opportunity presented by Mr Taylor further to embarrass the

Tories. Mr Hague could see things were not going his party's way and made a quick exit. William Cash (C. Stone) said "It doesn't matter what decisions were taken in the 1980s or 1990s", prompting Labour shouts of "Oh yes it does".

But Mr Cash made a plea, accepted by Mr Rooker, that the issue should not be left exclusively to scientists and should be referred to an ad-hoc select committee.

Mr Rooker sat down to backslaps from his own side, with the Tories looking bemused at how he had successfully turned the tables against them.

Thomas Sutcliffe is away

THE SKETCH



MICHAEL BROWN

## Safety pledge on sale of modified food

THE GOVERNMENT made a fresh attempt to reassure the public about genetically modified foods yesterday by declaring that consumer safety was its top priority.

Jeff Rooker, the Food minister, promised MPs that such foods would be clearly labelled with no "free-for-all" on the release of modified crops into the environment.

Answering an emergency question, Mr Rooker stressed that products such as tomato paste and soya were put on the market only after "careful scrutiny" of their health impact.

He said that much current public concern could have been avoided if the last government had forced American manufacturers to segregate GM from non-GM ingredients. He said that the Tories "missed the boat" by failing to secure agreement with the European Union to insist that the products were separated and labelled.

British retailers claim that they cannot identify modified soya products because supplies from the US use a mixture of GM and non-GM sources.

GM PRODUCE

BY PAUL WAUGH

Political Correspondent

To the cheers of Labour backbenchers, Mr Rooker also revealed that GM-based tomato to paste was approved by the Tories for sale in 1994, soya in 1995 and maize in 1996 and 1997.

The Government had opened up to public scrutiny the activities of its advisory panels on GM issues and was pressing the European Commission to label animal feeds as quickly as possible.

"We believe we have a robust system for ensuring that the consumer is fully protected. Above all it is the Government's first priority to ensure that the safety of consumers is fully protected," Mr Rooker said. He condemned recent press "scare stories" about the issue and claimed that biotechnology development had "huge potential" to benefit society.

Paul Tyler, the Liberal Democrat food spokesman, called for effective labelling, which he said was crucial to allow the public and British retailers to make decisions.

He said the only way to restore public confidence was to recognise the risks and have ministers whose "independence and integrity" could be relied on.

He demanded to know whether Tony Blair had come under pressure from President Bill Clinton to help out Monsanto, the American biotech giant that has led the controversial field, and called for a three-year delay before herbicide tolerant and insect resistant crops were planted on a commercial basis.

"A Government that gets its friends to suppress the publication of inconvenient research findings, accepts sponsorship from companies involved in promoting the commercial growth of GM crops and refuses to publish the advice it receives on this sensitive issue doesn't deserve the public's trust," he said.

Andrew Mackinlay, the MP for Thurrock, made clear he was "not happy" about the proposal and said there was "deep concern" whether the "unsatisfactory" transitional stage would endure. "The principle of hereditary peers is alien to us who are socialist," he said.

But Mr Mandelson defended the amendment, to be put forward by Lord Weatherill, the chairman of the cross-benchers, which would allow 91

GROWING DISCONTENT was apparent among Labour backbenchers yesterday over Government plans to retain nearly 100 hereditary peers beyond stage one of House of Lords reform, although Peter Mandelson, the former cabinet

minister, insisted that the deal would safeguard other important legislation.

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LORDS REFORM

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

Political Reporter

hereditary to be elected to the Lords during the transitional stage. He said it would be "an added incentive" for hereditary peers not to disrupt the reform.

Speaking during the re-

summed committee stage of the House of Lords Bill, which will scrap their right to sit and vote, the MP for Hartlepool said the deal would enable the Government's entire legislative programme to proceed "expeditiously".

John McAlion, the Labour MP for Dundee East, said he would vote against such plans if introduced into the Bill in the Lords. The Commons was being asked to pay "a kind of

hereditary to the Lords to stop it blocking other Bills, he said. Tony Benn, the MP for Chesterfield, has already warned that the Government could face a backbench revolt if it accepts the proposed compromise because it would breach the party's manifesto commitment to abolish hereditary peers' voting rights.

Dr Liam Fox, the Tory constitutional spokesman, said the Commons was being "treated with contempt" by a Government that expected Labour MPs to oppose the amendment if put forward in the Commons but vote for it when the Bill comes back from the Lords. "We have a eunuch parliament,"

Labour backbenchers are there merely for the convenience of the executive. Members allowing themselves to be pawns of the executive is a deeply dispiriting experience."

Margaret Beckett, the Commons leader, ruled out accepting the compromise move in the Commons because, if the Bill is blocked in the Lords, ministers want to be able to invoke the Parliament Act to force it onto the Statute Book without the Weatherill amendment.

Mr Benn said: "If this goes through, the first example of the modernisation for the millennium is the Prime Minister making 91 hereditary peers into life peers."

## Hereditary peers deal upsets MPs

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, will return to the Kosovo peace talks at Rambouillet after warning the Commons that the negotiations could end in failure.

Mr Cook will meet his French counterpart, Hubert Vedrine, to review progress and try to push the Serbs and ethnic Albanians towards a settlement to stop the fighting.

However, speaking in the Commons yesterday, Mr Cook warned that a successful outcome was far from assured.

"In my statement to the House two weeks ago, I warned that I could not guarantee that the talks would necessarily end in agreement. That remains the case today," he said.

The international powers have set a deadline of noon on Saturday for a deal at the peace conference in the 14th-century

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Hilary Jolly, the winner of the millennium hymn competition, at St Paul's Cathedral yesterday Neville Elder

## Pill scare drives abortions to record

A LONG-TERM crisis of confidence in oral contraception, sparked by the Pill scare three years ago, has led to the highest level yet of legal abortions in the UK, according to new government statistics.

In 1998, abortions reached 14 per 1,000 women of childbearing age, compared with 12 per 1,000 just before the October 1995 Pill scare. The rate was 8 per 1,000 in 1971. Abortions were de-criminalised in 1968.

There was national concern when seven of the most popular, newer brands of the Pill were found to be twice as likely to cause dangerous blood clots as older, cheaper brands. Users were advised to switch brands, but many immediately stopped using contraception, resulting in a rash of unplanned pregnancies and terminations.

Latest government statistics suggest the problem has not gone away, with a 4 per cent increase in abortions in the last three months of 1998 compared with the same period the year before. The increase has been across all age groups.

Karen Dunnell, editor of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) bulletins, said yesterday: "There is a general feeling, perhaps, that the Pill scare caused a crisis of confidence in methods of contraception. It may be why slightly larger numbers of women are deciding to use abortion."

Analysis published yesterday also revealed a mortality crisis for the thirty-something generation. Although the death rate has been decreasing for generations, it has stopped falling for people in their twenties and thirties. For some

BY LOUISE JURY

groups of men, death rates were higher in 1994-96 than they were 10 years ago. Drug and alcohol dependence has led to a higher incidence of mental disorders, the researchers said. The problem is compounded by deaths from Aids and high suicide rates. One in four deaths among men in their twenties is a suicide.

For women, breast and cervical cancer deaths are decreasing. But deaths from digestive problems – particularly due to alcohol – are hitting women in their early thirties. Mortality rates have improved least among women aged 30-34.

Statistics also showed that GPs had headed advice from the British Thoracic Society on treating asthma with inhaled steroids rather than drugs that tackle the symptoms alone.

Dr Seeromanie Harding reported a range of statistics proving you are more likely to die younger if you are unemployed or poor. People who experienced more than one period of unemployment had higher death rates than those who remained employed. People raised in children's homes and men placed in detention or psychiatric centres had a considerably higher risk of ill-health and premature death.

The ONS has previously published evidence of the high mortality rates of Irish migrants in England and Wales. New figures confirm a mortality rate, even among second-generation Irish migrants, 20 per cent higher than of all other people in England and Wales.

## Plane nearly hit city's radio mast

BY PHILIP THORNTON  
Transport Correspondent

AN AIRCRAFT carrying 48 passengers came close to a transmitter mast in a heavily populated part of a city centre after it flew wildly off course, according to a report published yesterday.

The Brymon Airways Dash 8 plane flew near the radio mast in the Northfield area of Aberdeen as it was coming in to land on 29 September last year.

The report into the incident, by the Air Accident Investigations Branch, found the plane was only 27 metres from the mast vertically but 650 metres away laterally.

According to witness reports, the plane also came close to hitting Stockhill Court, a 15-storey tower block. The approach was so low that leaves of the trees in the playground of nearby Cornhill Primary

school were rustled in the aircraft's slipstream. The AAIB report found that the 51-year-old pilot made a series of errors. The course he set for landing was 90 degrees off what it should have been, it said.

He had to abandon his first attempt at landing and as he attempted a "go around" to land again, he got his height/speed ratio muddled before the plane levelled at the height agreed with air traffic controllers and landed safely.

The report said the captain, who has since resigned, intended to attempt a manual approach, but re-engaged the autopilot during the first descent. He ended up well away from where he should have been, but was unaware why.

## Millennium prize winner derides 'sickening hype'

BY CLARE GARNER  
Religious Affairs Correspondent

ORGANISERS OF the St Paul's Cathedral hymn for the millennium competition were probably thrilled when they heard their winner was the aptly named Hilary Jolly. Yesterday, at the prize-giving, their joy must have seemed a little premature as she lambasted all aspects of the celebrations.

Given the choice, Mrs Jolly, 52, would have ignored the arrival of the year 2000. She was "sickened by millennium hype", which she described as "pagan and most unpleasant".

Her parish priest persuaded her to compose a hymn for the millennium. "As he put it, 'If the millennium is going to be celebrated, we should claim it for Jesus Christ,'" she said, adding: "And that's about as positive as I can feel about the millennium, quite frankly."

Speaking in St Paul's Chapel, in the crypt of St Paul's, Mrs Jolly, from Cambridge, elaborated on what she meant by pagan hype. "Dare I say it: the Dome, and a lot of other

things besides." At this point the Dean of St Paul's, the Very Rev John Moses, was concerned that what was supposed to be a happy occasion was taking a bitter turn. "In this cathe-

dral, let's be quite clear what dome she means," he said, trying to leaven the mood.

But Mrs Jolly had the last word between her teeth. "The other Dome, the lesser Dome," she railed. "I think it's a temple to Man... I particularly dislike the fact that it seems to have as the

centre-piece a giant human figure. The millennium is not about Man, it's about God."

Mrs Jolly's hymn, chosen from 444 entries, is set to music by Paul Bryan, director of music at St John's College School, Cambridge. His entry beat 309 other tunes.

Mrs Jolly, who has two children, heard the combination of words and music for the first time yesterday. She was thrilled. "I was expecting, in rather a cynical way, something much more upbeat. I'm happy, because it's dignified."

The hymn will be sung at the national millennium service at St Paul's on 2 January 2000 and in churches across the country throughout next year. The organisers of the competition hope it will find its way into mainstream hymn books.

Asked if she had plans for New Year's Eve 1999, Mrs Jolly said: "I will go to bed, as I always do, at about 8.30pm and get up, as I always do, at about 5.30am."

### THE HYMN FOR 2000

First and last verses of the winning hymn, "Through the Darkness of the Ages". Words by Hilary Jolly. Music by Paul Bryan.

*Through the darkness of the ages,  
Through the sorrows of the days,  
Strength of weary generations,  
Lifting hearts in hope and praise.  
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THE INDEPENDENT  
Wednesday 17 February 1999

HOME NEWS

# 'Bawdy' police are cleared in air rage case

TWO POLICE officers and their friend were acquitted yesterday of being drunk on an aircraft after they denied gyrating to the film *The Full Monty* and misbehaving on a flight from Florida to Manchester. But the judge said they had clearly been bawdy and disruptive.

Inspector David Gareth Perrett, his son, PC Richard Perrett and Peter Beck, a publican, were returning to Manchester from a golfing holiday in Orlando, where they enjoyed a "fabulous time".

They denied drunkenness on an aircraft using foul language and dancing to the in-flight film during the seven-and-a-half-hour trip. But Mr Justice Emsor said the jury had been merciful and the defendants' conduct was clearly unworthy of the position they held as police officers.

He refused to award them costs, adding: "You were not guilty of a criminal offence but it was clear your behaviour was objectionable. There was clear evidence from five passengers, supported by four members of the cabin crew, that you were behaving in a loud and bawdy manner and that you spoilt the flight for a number of passengers."

He said Mr Beck, 56, should have known better because of his position as a licensee. Insp



Richard Perrett: Cleared  
Perrett, 49, and his 26-year-old son, both with the West Yorkshire Police, were said to have insulted and mocked two elderly lady passengers for refusing to watch the film about male strippers.

Later a senior West Yorkshire officer said internal disciplinary action against the two officers, which had been suspended during the trial, was being reopened.

■ Lee Thresher, 29, an electrician, admitted endangering a BA flight by smashing a window after drinking three double whiskies and taking a Valium. Uxbridge magistrates were told Thresher, of Hullbridge, Essex, also attacked two passengers on the plane from Heathrow to Bangkok. He will be sentenced at Isleworth Crown Court on 31 March.

showing off... I think they were all trying to intimidate us."

Insp Perrett, a policeman for 28 years, claimed the women had misheard a conversation about motorbikes. "The only thing I can assume is that we were talking about bikes," he said. "They must have misheard or misinterpreted it. I had not intentionally said anything to the ladies."

Ian Metcalfe, for the prosecution, said a passenger saw Richard Perrett handing out a litre bottle of gin among his group after their in-flight drinks had been served. The men refused to surrender their passports to a stewardess when she asked them and quietened only after the pilot had spoken to them.

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ACCESSIBLE, INSPIRING and exciting: none of these adjectives could have been used about the Royal Opera House over the past five years.

But yesterday the £21.6m redevelopment in Covent Garden, central London, was unveiled for its topping-out ceremony. It proved a transformation of the House, not just in terms of architecture and public image. The renovation of the original 1858 building by the architect Jeremy Dixon includes new public areas, new rehearsal and performance studios and a public rooftop terrace with views over London.

Most impressive of all is the

restoration of the main part of the 19th-century Floral Hall, the roof of which was destroyed by fire in the 1950s, and which was recently used as a scenery store. Yesterday it was clear how this will become a vast and striking main foyer, open to the public during the day, and with a large glass frontage on to the street.

What underlies all the architectural improvements on display was a belated realisation that access and anti-elitism must speak through the shape of the building as well as

through ticket prices. And so there are studio theatres that will give lunchtime performances, free at least once a week, better sightlines and leg-room in the newly air-conditioned main auditorium and better access for people with disabilities. Everyone will enter through the same entrance for the first time and mingle in the same spaces.

And there will be a pedestrian link from Bow Street to the Covent Garden piazza, which will encourage visitors into the building, almost by stealth.

The building itself, in stone and glass, anchored in a granite plinth, demonstrates the

skillful way in which a Victorian cast-iron glasshouse - the Floral Hall - has been restored and sandwiched delicately between the familiar stone porticos and a new, narrow glass tower that houses the elevator.

At yesterday's ceremony Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said: "This is a wonderful day. It marks an end of the doom and gloom. More people will be able to come and enjoy excellent work than has ever been the case before."

Increased public access at the Covent Garden theatre has been one of the conditions for continued Arts Council subsidy.

Port. Sir Richard is leaving the paper to concentrate on arranging and editing.

Criticism from arts groups and MPs, the Arts Council and the Government, was to be expected because of the £12m lottery grant to the Covent Garden development scheme, and because of the £12m cut in the resident Royal Ballet's budget. The Opera company received a subsidy.

Yesterday Sir Richard was at the opening, who took a few minutes to say when the old theatre was re-opened a year ago, "It's a masterpiece. It belongs to us all in this country. Who would have thought it would be a lottery ticket?"

## Hotel guests wreak havoc

HOTEL BOSS and police are tackling a growing problem in the accommodation industry - hotel rage. Staff have fallen victim to attacks ranging from verbal abuse to physical assault, said Strathclyde Police.

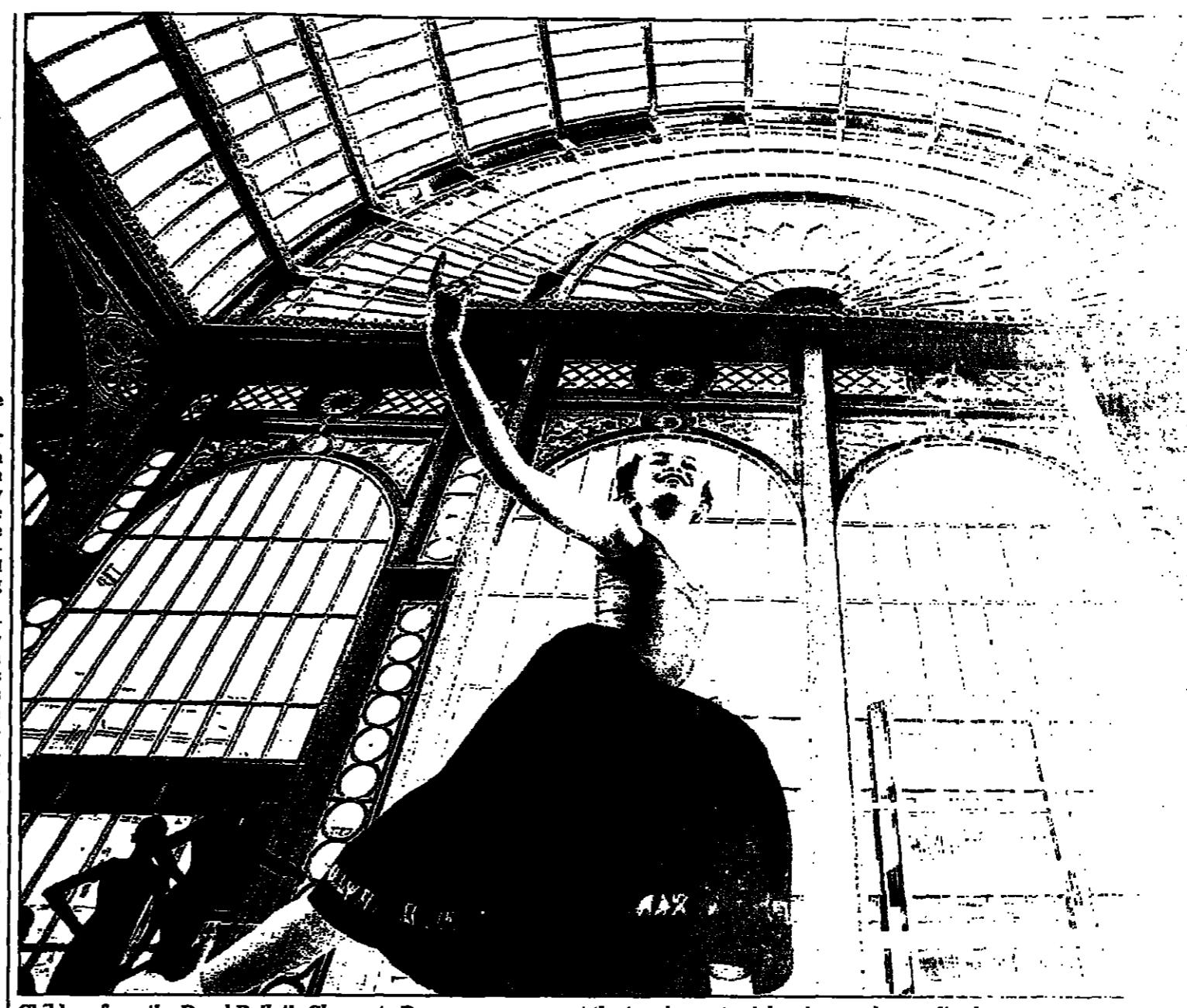
The force is hosting a seminar to advise hoteliers how to cope with troublemakers. A police spokesman said: "Glasgow's growing reputation as a centre for business, culture and tourism has seen an in-

crease in the number of hotels. Unfortunately this has also brought an increase in volatile behaviour. Staff can face various forms of violence and we want to make sure they have the best training so they can deal with these incidents."

Bill Fox whose company, Maybo, specialises in the management of aggression and personal safety advice, said the difficulties experienced by hotel staff were no different to those experienced in other jobs.

"The problem goes right across the board. There is increasing awareness and concern about violence in the workplace everywhere and the issue has a very high profile."

Tom Stannage, chairman of Glasgow City Centre Hotel Watch, said: "Anything that can help staff deal with difficult situations is good."



Children from the Royal Ballet's Chance to Dance programme at the topping-out celebrations at Covent Garden

## 'Elite' Garden goes all democratic

BY DAVID LISTER  
Arts News Editor

restoration of the main part of the 19th-century Floral Hall, the roof of which was destroyed by fire in the 1950s, and which was recently used as a scenery store. Yesterday it was clear how this will become a vast and striking main foyer, open to the public during the day, and with a large glass frontage on to the street.

What underlies all the architectural improvements on display was a belated realisation that access and anti-elitism must speak through the shape of the building as well as

through ticket prices. And so there are studio theatres that will give lunchtime performances, free at least once a week, better sightlines and leg-room in the newly air-conditioned main auditorium and better access for people with disabilities. Everyone will enter through the same entrance for the first time and mingle in the same spaces.

And there will be a pedestrian link from Bow Street to the Covent Garden piazza, which will encourage visitors into the building, almost by stealth.

The building itself, in stone and glass, anchored in a granite plinth, demonstrates the

skillful way in which a Victorian cast-iron glasshouse - the Floral Hall - has been restored and sandwiched delicately between the familiar stone porticos and a new, narrow glass tower that houses the elevator.

At yesterday's ceremony Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said: "This is a wonderful day. It marks an end of the doom and gloom. More people will be able to come and enjoy excellent work than has ever been the case before."

Increased public access at the Covent Garden theatre has been one of the conditions for continued Arts Council subsidy.

Yesterday Sir Richard was at the opening, who took a few minutes to say when the old theatre was re-opened a year ago, "It's a masterpiece. It belongs to us all in this country. Who would have thought it would be a lottery ticket?"

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## Asterix routs rivals at box office

BY JOHN LICHFIELD

AFTER SUCCESSFULLY resisting the Romans for 40 years, Asterix the Gaul and his monumental sidekick Obélix have defied all the odds - and the treacherous of the French movie critics - to defeat the massed legions of Hollywood.

Despite a series of stinking reviews in the French press, the first Asterix movie with live actors, including Gérard Depardieu as Obélix, has had a triumphant first two weeks at the box office. In its first week, the movie, *Asterix et Obélix Contre César*, broke the French attendance record, with 2,718,443 tickets sold. By the end of its second week it had reached 4.3 million, well on the way to the 10 million target set by its producer.

The feisty little cartoon-book Cel and his dim friend are fighting a rearguard action in defence of French - and European - cinematic culture, almost as desperate as the Gaulish resistance to the Romans 2,000 years ago. At £27m, the movie is the most expensive made in France. It carries the hopes of the entire French cinema sector, the only fully functioning such industry still surviving in Europe.

Attendance at French films in France fell below 30 per cent of the total audience for the first time last year, largely because of the success of the Hollywood blockbuster *Titanic* and several American full-length cartoons.

The French industry was counting on the Asterix movie to reverse this trend and to prove that it was not doomed to become a bit player even in its domestic cinemas.

The film, supported by



Christian Clavier and Gérard Depardieu are defeating all-comers with the film of Asterix and Obélix

French, German and Belgian money, with French, German and Italian actors, was viciously received by the French movie critics. They said it was clumsy, too dependent on Hollywood-style, computer-generated special effects and, unkindest cut of all, not very funny. Most adults who have seen the movie tend to agree. Children and adolescents, the main target audiences, do not care.

As the movie's producer, Claude Berri (*Jean de Flo-*

*rete*) said, the cerebral, slow-moving, sensitively-acted movies praised by French critics tend to vanish at the box office, even in France. He said the panning of Asterix was a good sign. And so it proved. Asterix et Obélix Contre

## Uproar over 'lazy' judge in Aids trial

BY JOHN LICHFIELD  
in Paris

THE HIGH-PROFILE trial of a former prime minister and two ex-ministers for failing to prevent Aids from being passed on by French blood banks is threatening to subside into chaos and farce.

The week-old trial has turned into a media witch-hunt, not against the accused but against the presiding judge. He has been accused by all sides of incompetence, laziness, arrogance, bad manners, laxity towards the accused, making jokes in bad taste and using language more usually associated with the far right.

The president of the court, Christian Le Guehec, 68, a former appeal judge who has never presided over a trial before, has hinted that he might stand down if the complaints continue. He attributes his difficulties not to his own failings but to the feverish media expectations of the trial, the first of its kind before a new, partly political, part-judicial court.

"This trial is in public. But it is not made for the public," he said at one stage - a remark that was taken as further evidence of his arrogance. Doubts about Mr Le Guehec's command of the detail of the proceedings were compounded by a question he whispered to a fellow judge, while forgetting to turn off his microphone: "Remember me, who is Garret?"

Dr Michel Garret is the man at the centre of the whole affair: the former head of the French state blood service, who has already served a prison sentence for allowing plasma contaminated with Aids to be given to haemophiliacs.

On another occasion, the



Former prime minister Laurent Fabius yesterday AFP

judge used the word "Sidaïque" for "Aids victim" (after the French acronym Sida). This is a dismissive and insulting word used only by the far-right National Front. The next day he made a doubtful joke about heroin addicts and Haitian homosexuals but most damning of all, according to lawyers for the victims, Mr Le Guehec has given an easy ride to the three accused, and especially to the former Socialist prime minister, Laurent Fabius.

Mr Fabius and two of his former colleagues are accused of manslaughter. It is alleged they delayed the systematic testing of donors' blood for five critical months in 1985 to allow a French firm to complete its development of testing equipment. An alternative was already available from the United States.

Relations between the court president and the politician-judges came to a head at the end of last week at a private meeting, in which the MPs strongly advised Mr Le Guehec to spend the weekend catching up on his homework.

## Jury visits death path

BY ADAM LEBOR  
in Domachevo

A BRITISH court convened in the village of Domachevo in western Belarus yesterday, with judge and jury visiting the site in a forest where Anthony Sawonuk allegedly slaughtered Jews in the Second World War.

The 77-year-old, who now lives in south London, denies killing two men and two women in Domachevo between September and December 1942.

Yesterday they began to relive the horror that was visited on Domachevo after Ger-

man forces occupied parts of the Soviet Union.

Led by Belarussian prosecutors, the court walked down the "path of death", the route from the Jewish ghetto to a nearby forest, where 3,800 Jews were killed and dumped in mass graves. Nearly was the site where Sawonuk allegedly slew his four victims, after they escaped one of the massacres.

Review front



Sawonuk: Denies crimes

## Firms to pay Nazi-era slaves

BY TONY CZUCZKA

ACCEPTING "MORAL responsibility" for the Holocaust, top German companies are to set up an industry fund to compensate former slave workers and other Nazi-era victims.

The companies promised to launch the fund by 1 September, but did not say how much it would pay into it.

The chairman of Deutsche

Bank, Rolf Breuer, an architect of the fund, called a joint decla-

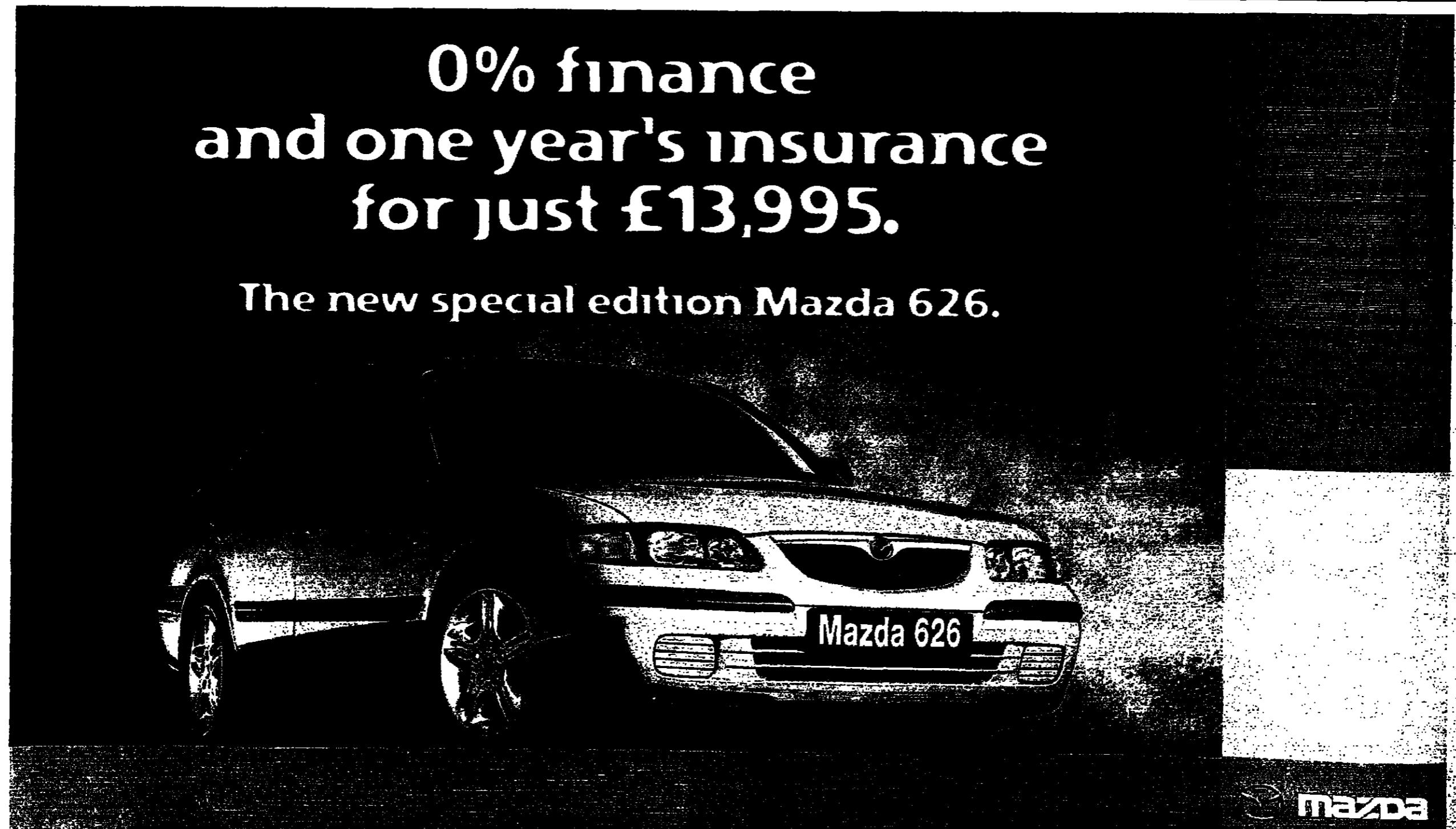
suits against German companies in the United States by former slave workers.

Mr Schröder's chief of staff, Bodo Hombock, said 200,000 to 300,000 former slave labourers would be eligible for payments.

Those firms setting up the foundation for "remembrance, responsibility and the future" include car makers Volkswagen, DaimlerChrysler and BMW, chemical and pharma-

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Laurent Fabius yesterday  
400,000 people are living in poverty in Britain. The Children's Society is calling for a lottery to help them. The lottery begins at birth. The odds are, one in three babies will be born into poverty. This is not the developing world we're talking about. This is here, now, in Britain. The downward spiral that leaves thousands of children excluded from society is random, relentless and no fault of their own. Where you happen to be born can have a profound effect on the rest of your life. The highest concentration of disadvantaged children can be found in only 59 local authority districts in the country. They may be no-go areas to some, but they can be no-exit areas for the young people who have to grow up there. How can we gamble with the future of children this way? With 3.3 million existing in families with less than half the average national income, children are now the largest group caught in the poverty trap. So where does the buck stop? With government? Or with each and every one of us? The Children's Society believes we all have a responsibility to the next generation. And with your help, we can do something to redress the balance between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'.

## It could be you

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## When the disadvantaged become the disappeared

Every year thousands of children fall through the net. In the local areas, where these children are concentrated, more than 25% of them will begin life as underweight babies, they have a 30% higher mortality rate and they are twice as likely to die in childhood accidents. These same children are disadvantaged in education. They can become disruptive in class. Unable to cope, schools exclude them in their thousands - 150,000 exclusions in a single year. The majority are children from poorer homes. Without a decent start in life, many young people never catch up.

Truancy in these deprived districts is currently running at four times the national average.

While one in four pupils at secondary schools near rundown housing estates, leave at sixteen without a single GCSE, five times the national average.

The vast majority of underage pregnancies can be traced back to the same areas.

4,700 girls of school age fell pregnant in 1998 - more than any other country in Europe.

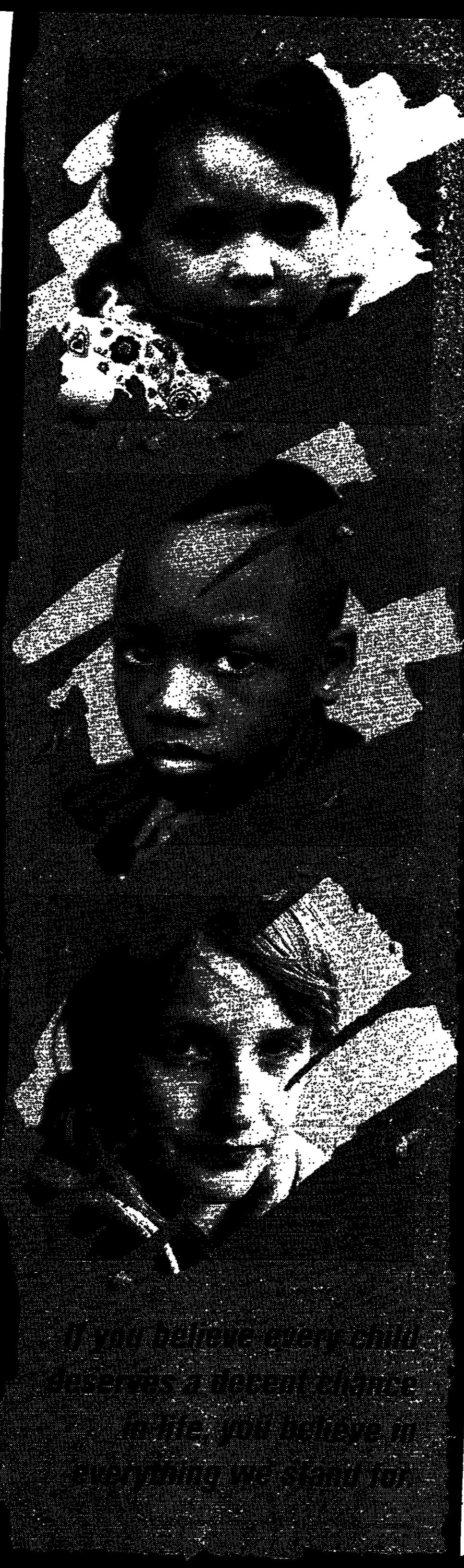
Uneducated, unhappy young people will buck the system when they feel abandoned by it.

Many turn to crime. And pay the price.

Britain locked up 11,000 teenagers in 1998. That's a 40% increase in just five years - a depressing European record.

A staggering 43,000 children run away each year.

Life on the streets can be desperate and dangerous, with the real risk of being caught up with drugs and prostitution, simply to survive.



## Beating the odds

Many of the problems children face are complex and interlinked.

The way we see it, they demand an holistic approach.

There is no quick fix. But there is progress to be proud of. Last year The Children's Society helped nearly 40,000 children, directly.

We are the only national charity working with youngsters on remand in prison.

We were the first to open a refuge for those at risk on the streets, the first to develop programmes in primary schools to proactively prevent exclusions and the first to introduce family centres.

Whilst our resources are modest, the impact we make on children's lives is not.

Helping them realise their full potential, enables them to act as catalysts for change within their own neighbourhood.

The Children's Society is their advocate, advisor, friend.

*"When Mum left we stayed with Dad. He couldn't get work so they took our home. Social Services put us in one of them bed and breakfast places. Dad and my brother were upstairs, I was on another floor. It was horrible. The guy in the next room started touching me. One night he tried to rape me. They were going to put me and my brother in care. It was the people at The Children's Society that stopped it. They talked to me lots about what happened. And they helped us get a flat. Life savers, that's what Dad calls them."*

Karen aged 14

As a Voluntary Society of The Church of England and The Church in Wales, we reach out unconditionally to children when they are at their most vulnerable.

And they are nearer than you think.

The vast majority of you live within a short car ride of real poverty. To see exactly how close you are to the most deprived areas in England, Scotland and Wales, you can phone for our Lottery Scandal Map.

Being born in the wrong place can extinguish every opportunity a child might have in life.

Which is why your support is invaluable. By helping to fund our work, you will be helping those children who have never had a decent chance.

It shouldn't be a lottery.

Help us put it right.

*Please call now for your free copy of our Lottery Scandal Map or to make a donation. Thank you.*

**0845 600 4400**



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Society**

A Voluntary Society of The Church of England and The Church in Wales  
Room 229, Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL  
Charity Registration No. 221124

2609/1

# UN plea over Indian burnings

AMID A darkening national mood of gloom and apprehension after the burning to death of an Australian missionary and his children three weeks ago, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, met the Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpeyi, yesterday and voiced the international community's dismay about this and other anti-Christian attacks.

Mrs Robinson's trip to India to take part in a regional human rights workshop was planned months ago, but it assumed new significance after the murder of Graham Staines and his sons Philip, 10, and Timothy, 8, in a remote village in Orissa, eastern India, on 23 January.

The Australian, who had spent more than 20 years working in leprosy hospitals in Orissa, was barricaded into his jeep with his sons by a chanting mob in the middle of the night, and the vehicle set alight.

No one has been charged with the murders but police suspicion settled on a Hindu nationalist fanatic called Dara Singh, who was linked to a series of attacks on Muslims.

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party-led coalition government threw itself into damage limitation, dispatching a ministerial team to the site of the murders. It reported that organisations with links to the government were not involved. The report was met with scepticism because, whatever the true culprits, the horrifying crime took place in an atmosphere of anti-Christian hysteria deliberately whipped up

BY PETER POPHAM  
in Delhi

by the BJP's Hindu nationalist allies. In the past, organisations such as the Bajrang Dal, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Shiv Sena have attacked India's biggest minority, the Muslims. The destruction of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and the communal massacres that followed are blamed squarely on the storm troops of Hindu nationalism.

Until last year Christians had never felt the brunt of such attacks. All that has changed. Since the election of the present government 11 months ago, India's Christians have faced an unprecedented onslaught, with dozens of churches destroyed or damaged. The murders in Orissa appeared to be the climax of an orchestrated campaign. As Mrs Robinson told the BBC on Monday, the attacks "have damaged India's reputation in the world for religious tolerance" – and as religious tolerance was a key issue of human rights, it was an issue she felt should be raised with the government.

The Orissa murders have proved to be a watershed in the government's relations with the intellectual community, prompting a spate of gloomily reflective articles on the state of the nation. Even cheerleaders of Hindu nationalism such as *The Pioneer* newspaper have joined in the breast-beating and hand-wringing. But horrifying though the killings were, there is something artificial and unreal about the strength of the reaction to them. Terrible things happen in India all the time;



The UN Human Rights commissioner, Mary Robinson (left) with Sonia Gandhi, president of the Congress Party

sharing the front page with the Orissa murders was the story of an unattended newborn baby dragged from a hospital by a dog and destroyed in the street.

Despite the condemnations, attacks on Christians have continued. In Gujarat, where Hindu

nationalists are in power, a census of Christians is being carried out, which has raised the community's anxieties. Elsewhere the VHP has launched a campaign to "welcome back" to Hinduism tribal people formerly converted to Christianity.

Anyone brought up to believe in the tolerant character of Hinduism may be baffled. Its true goal is almost certainly to marginalise Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born president of the Congress Party, stigmatising her as a member of an alien mi-

nority that is also weak. Hindu zealots have accused her of causing her late husband, former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, to be converted to Catholicism.

But it is the poor and defenceless whose lives are being thrown into turmoil by the per-

secution. And it is India's reputation as, in Mary Robinson's words yesterday, "a country ... which from the very outset of the United Nations has championed the cause of freedom and human rights" which is being damaged, perhaps beyond repair.

AP

EDITH CRESSON, the beleaguered European commissioner, suffered a serious blow yesterday when four dossiers detailing suspected fraud in one of her multi-million pound EU spending programmes were sent to Belgian police.

The move is an embarrassment to Ms Cresson, who had insisted that any problems with

in the Leonardo programme –

administration of which had

been contracted to a company

called Agenor – were limited to

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THE INDEPENDENT  
11 AUGUST 1998  
Bombs  
rock  
Uzbek  
capital

By Paul Dukes  
in Tashkent

THE CENTRAL Asian city of Tashkent was rocked yesterday after a series of blasts was claimed by guerrilla organisations, including the Islamic party Hizb ut-Tahrir, and the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, said the explosions had been carried out by "terrorists".

The blasts are believed to have taken place yesterday morning, and the president said that the explosions had been carried out by "terrorists".

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# Clinton foes hit by trial backlash

DESPERATE TO boost its image and electoral prospects for 2000 after President Bill Clinton's acquittal, the Republican Party has launched a nationwide effort to "reconnect" with its grassroots through more than 100 town hall-style meetings across the country.

How difficult that reconnection effort will be was illustrated yesterday in Washington, where leaders of three minority constituencies lambasted the Congressional party for giving succour to the Democrats' presentation of the party as "extremist".

The three groups – the Log Cabin Republicans, representing the party's gay and lesbian members, the New Majority Committee, promoting the interests of black and Hispanic Republicans, and Republicans for Choice, which combats the party's hardline anti-abortion stance – attacked the Congressional party for perpetuating Republicans as "mean-spirited, intolerant, and agenda-less".

Citing Republican losses at the mid-term Congressional elections last November and the persistence of President Clinton's high poll ratings throughout the impeachment process, they warned that the party risks fulfilling Democrats' accusations of "extremism" unless it became more inclusive.

Where Republicans had successfully made "liberal" the scold word for the Eighties, they said, Democrats had managed to make "extremist" the scold word for the late Nineties – and make it stick to Republicans. According to Richard Tafel of the Log Cabin Republicans, "the rank and file are so depressed by the state of the

BY MARY DEJEVSKY  
in Washington

party that they might bring back Newt Gingrich". The right-wing populist House Speaker resigned in November after the party's perceived failure at the polls.

In their single-minded pursuit of impeachment, he said, the Republicans had scared the public into thinking it was an "anti-everything party" and laid it open to accusations of hypocrisy. There was Bob Barr, he said – referring to one of the more rabid House prosecutors – who was now introducing "a defence of marriage Act" into Congress, "and he's on his third marriage".

Arguing for more inclusive-ness towards minorities, Faye Anderson cited the efforts of more centrist state governors, including George W Bush of Texas, who campaigned in Spanish as well as English, and reinforced the Democrats' view that it was the bigger than expected black turnout in Southern states last November that had helped to remove two apparently safe governors in Alabama and South Carolina.

"The party is in trouble," she said, "and needs all the help it can get." Its adverse image among voters through impeachment "has inflicted incredible damage", she added, and borrowed from Bill Clinton the notion that the party should start to "look like America".

For pro-Choice Republicans, Ann Stone said the party's stance on impeachment had sent the message that Republicans "wanted government out of the boardroom but were content to have it in your bedrooms".



A reveler dances on top of a float in Rio de Janeiro's Mardi Gras carnival. Reuters

## School sweetheart lingers

WHILE THE White House sex scandal has vanished from the Washington map almost as rapidly as it arrived 13 months ago, some of the associated allegations – the use of dirty tricks against troublesome women, for instance – have lingered.

Making a rare appearance in Washington yesterday was Dolly Kyle Browning, Bill Clinton's Arkansas school sweetheart, who claims the Clinton camp sought to "disparage, defame and destroy her reputation" when she tried to publish an exposé of what she said was a long-term relationship between them.

The case was taken up by a watchdog organisation, Judicial Watch, which served preliminary papers last year and gave Mr Clinton until 27 July

to respond or face civil action. Mr Clinton and Ms Kyle Browning have given different accounts of a meeting they had in 1994 at their school reunion. She says Mr Clinton apologised to her suggested she come to Washington and offered to find her a job. Mr Clinton said during his testimony in the Paula Jones case that she acknowledged that the account in her book was untrue, but said she needed the money. His account was corroborated by a member of his staff, Marsha Scott, whom Mr Clinton had asked to remain within earshot to protect himself.

Mr Kyle Browning, a property lawyer living in Texas, wrote a book, *Purposes of the Heart*, which recounts a woman's affair with a southern governor. The book, however, found no publisher and she and her husband published it privately last year, complaining that "Clinton, his agents and surrogates" did their utmost to stop it appearing.

The case was taken up by a

## Trapped in the lift with Jimi Hendrix

AMERICAN TIMES  
WASHINGTON

IT CAME into our building here in Washington a few months ago, and at first I barely noticed it. But it was always there somewhere, floating in the air just out of reach.

It is music. Or rather, it is Muzak for there is a difference.

As well as being a generic term, it is also a large and thriving company based in Seattle, in the fashionable Pacific Northwest of the United States, with revenues of about \$100m. It puts out its product via satellite feeds to thousands of businesses across America, broadcasting 60 different programmes, of which only one is now classic "background music".

It has its origins way back in the 1920s when a military officer was trying his hand at the new science of telephony.

General George Squiers was a formidable character, who



Jimi Hendrix is a hot item in the muzak invasion

experimented with radio in 1927, only a year after Marconi sent the first wireless message, and was the first passenger in an aircraft when he flew with the Wright brothers.

He helped to create two of the most powerful instruments of American global domination: the United States Air Force, and Muzak.

"This company was built on believing in the power of music," says Kenny Kahn, the vice-president for marketing, and music is now what it is about. Most of the programmes offered by Muzak these days are what they call "foreground music" – original versions of the songs, not camped-up reproductions.

And it is more than to be Nirvana or Jimi Hendrix, great products of the city of Seattle, than "Puff the Magic Dragon" arranged for strings.

The company no longer wishes to think about the bad old days and has become (slightly self-consciously) hip.

"Our goal is to say to people, 'We are not what you think we are,'" says Mr Kahn.

It has a whizzo website and lots of new concepts to describe what it does, which sound like the sleeve notes from a techno album. Its technicians are now described as "audio architects". And it has paid off: last week, the company was bought out for more than \$250m (£150m) by a Boston-based firm. It will take

Much of it was, by common

consent, terrible: unimaginative, dreary, saccharine-sweet rubbish that grated on the nerves. If that is still your mental image of Muzak, however, it is perhaps time to think again. Two years ago, the company had a small revolution, and it has put the emphasis back on the main product.

Muzak is the the world's largest radio station, sending DJ-free music around the nation by satellite and wire. It is about to start using the Web to sell its wares, taking a logical step on from its earlier use of technology: after all, General Squiers' company was originally called "Wired Radio".

And Muzak is no longer a term of pure invective, as it was a decade ago. Background music has become deeply fashionable, with the sound repackaged as "ambient", "lounge" or "cocktail".

It has not been universally popular in the *Independent* building in Washington. The property company that owns the block told us in its newsletter that everyone loved it, and that that had been seen tapping in the corridors. Some, however, were banging their heads on the wall. There were dark plots hatched, whisperings about pilers and wiring systems. Suddenly last week, the seventh floor was silent again. But by Monday, it was back: Muzak is, it seems, an unstoppable force.

ANDREW MARSHALL

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BALANCE	NOTICE 180*		NOTICE 180* MONTHLY INTEREST Gross %
	ANNUAL INTEREST Gross %	MONTHLY INTEREST Gross %	
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£100,000+	7.25	7.02	
£50,000+	7.15	6.93	
£25,000+	7.00	6.78	
£10,000+	6.50	6.31	

\*Annual and Monthly rates include a introductory premium of 0.50% Gross until 17/12/99

BALANCE	7 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT ANNUAL INTEREST Gross %	
	7 DAY NOTICE ANNUAL INTEREST Gross %	7 DAY NOTICE MONTHLY INTEREST Gross %
£1,000,000+	5.25	
£500,000+	5.10	
£250,000+	5.10	
£100,000+	5.05	
£50,000+	5.00	
£5,000+	4.75	

BALANCE	INSTANT PLUS* ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE		PREMIER PLUS ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % EXPATRIATE	PREMIER PLUS MONTHLY INTEREST GROSS % EXPATRIATE
	INSTANT PLUS* ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE	PREMIER PLUS ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % EXPATRIATE		
£250,000+	4.00	4.25	5.65	5.51
£100,000+	3.95	4.20	5.50	5.37
£50,000+	3.90	4.15	5.35	5.22
£25,000+	3.85	4.10	5.10	4.98
£10,000+	3.65	3.90	4.85	4.75
£5,000+	2.75	3.00	2.50	2.42
£2,500+	2.75	3.00	2.50	2.42
£1,000+	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50
£10+	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50

\*Rates quoted include a 1.5% bonus, the bonus is paid on the anniversary of the account opening providing no more than three withdrawals are made in one year

Accounts no longer available to new customers

BALANCE	INSTANT ACCESS ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE		60 DAY NOTICE ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE	60 DAY NOTICE MONTHLY INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE
	INSTANT ACCESS ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE	60 DAY NOTICE ANNUAL INTEREST GROSS % UK EXPATRIATE		
£50,000+	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.45
£25,000+	2.50	2.75	2.95	3.20
£10,000+	2.25	2.50	2.72	2.96
£5,000+	1.25	1.50	2.25	2.20
£2,500+	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00
£10+	1.00	1.00</td		

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IN THE BUSINESS REVIEW

- The man who owns cyberspace
- The supermarket that ate America
- Can DMGT survive the FTSE 100?
- The adman's adman revealed
- Investment

Plus: Hamish McRae, Diane Coyle, Derek Pain, Jo Davis, and The Trader

Dollar hits a high against the yen

THE DOLLAR hit a 10-week high against the yen yesterday after the Japanese government changed course on exchange rate and interest rate policy.

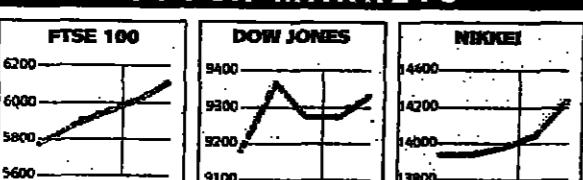
Etsuro Sakakibara, a Ministry of Finance official known as Mr Yen because of his influence on the Japanese currency, said he welcomed the recent fall in the yen. His comments, echoed by the governor of the Bank of Japan, sent the dollar through the 116 yen barrier for the first time since December. Moves by Japanese authorities to curb the rise in long-term bond yields helped dollar sentiment. The government said it would increase bond purchases and stem issuances in an attempt to prop up the struggling bond market.

Rolls-Royce wins £150m contract

Rolls-Royce, the aerospace engine maker, has won a £150m contract with British Aerospace to supply engines to power Australia's Hawk fighter aircraft with British Aerospace. The contract, for Rolls-Royce Turbomeca

Adour Mk 871 engines, covers 33 aircraft for the Royal Australian Air Force. Rolls-Royce will make the first batch of Adour engines at its Bristol plant, with the first to be delivered to BAE next month. Qantas will assemble and test the remaining engines from UK-prepared kits at Sydney Airport workshops. Rolls shares closed 1.5p down at 256.5p, amid speculation of an exclusive link-up between General Electric of the US and Boeing.

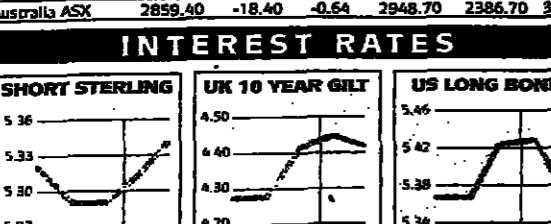
STOCK MARKETS



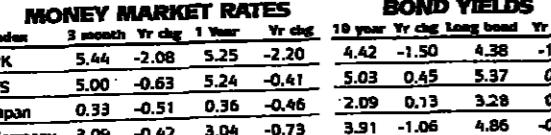
Dow Jones Index and graph at [Bloomberg](http://www.bloomberg.com)

INDICES

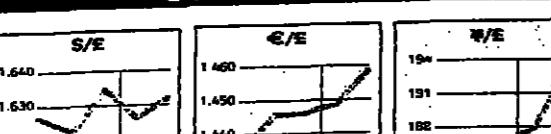
Index	Class	Change (%)	W	T	F	M	T
FTSE 100		6108.60	85.40	1.42	6195.60	4599.20	2.61
FTSE 250		5200.30	23.70	0.46	5970.90	4267.80	3.20
FTSE 350		2892.30	36.30	1.27	2986.10	2210.40	2.70
FTSE All Share		2795.30	33.82	1.50	2886.32	2243.55	2.74
FTSE Smallcap		2246.10	5.50	0.24	2793.60	1834.40	3.59
FTSE Midcap		1228.50	0.90	0.07	2157.10	1046.20	4.47
FTSE AIM		1226.50	2.20	0.26	1145.50	761.30	2.21
FTSE Euro Stoxx 100		1210.72	1.12	0.77	1302.37	1285.15	2.12
FTSE Euro Stoxx 300		1202.41	8.37	0.70	1332.07	1233.14	1.98
Dow Jones		9334.98	60.51	0.65	9647.96	7400.30	1.65
Nikkei		14231.64	177.92	1.21	17352.35	12787.90	1.02
Hong Kong		4042.38	32.02	0.24	11925.16	8564.79	3.72
Das		4504.68	25.13	0.52	6117.83	3823.71	1.74
S&P 500		1245.79	15.71	1.36	1283.54	923.32	1.37
Nordex		2348.73	27.37	1.18	2533.44	1357.09	2.28
Toronto 300		6449.40	1.82	0.03	7875.70	5320.90	1.64
Brasil Bovespa		8952.30	-37.83	-0.42	12339.14	4575.69	6.92
Belgium Bel20		3403.37	-4.66	-0.16	3713.21	2664.70	2.05
Amsterdam Exet		522.84	-0.47	-0.05	600.65	366.58	1.88
France CAC 40		4052.32	-12.87	-0.32	4404.94	2881.21	1.99
Milan MIB30		33759.00	-587.00	-0.71	39170.00	24175.00	1.21
Madrid Ibex 35		5799.30	-101.80	-1.03	10968.80	5869.90	1.90
Irish Overall		5310.50	74.74	1.43	5581.70	3732.57	1.47
S Korea Comp		551.77	0.00	0.00	651.95	277.37	0.68
Australia ASX		2859.40	-18.40	-0.64	2948.70	2386.70	3.21



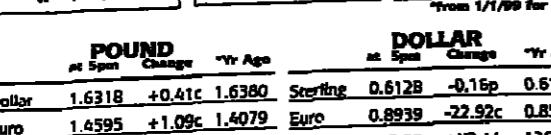
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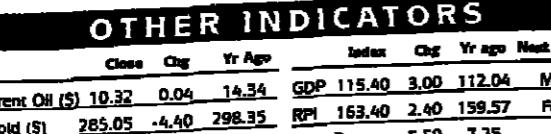
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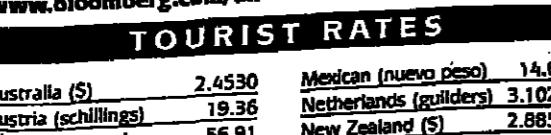
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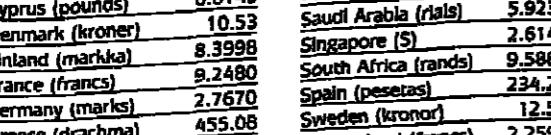
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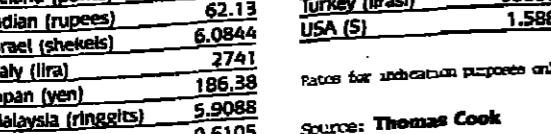
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Source: Thomas Cook

# BUSINESS

## Barclays declares war on costs as profits slip to £1.9bn

BY ANDREW GARFIELD  
Financial Editor

duce costs over the next three years," adding that the 15 per cent savings announced at Barclays last September showed what could be done.

Filling in the details of both the size and scope of the savings will be the job of Mike O'Neill, the new chief executive, who takes the reins next month.

Sir Peter said the plan is to give more details at the half-year stage. He also warned the City to expect "an exceptional charge for cost reduction

purposes," adding that retail financial services and corporate banking are the areas where the savings are most likely to fall.

In the meantime, he said, Barclays' costs will be held at 1998 levels as a "payment on account".

Some of the rise in costs came as a result of the bank's £1.6bn total expenditure on both the euro conversion and the year 2000 problem. These costs are budgeted to fall to £1.2bn this year.

However, Sir Peter admitted that the focus last year had been on growing the business rather than containing costs,

and with the economy's downturn, the emphasis had to shift.

The tough talk from Sir Peter provided further cheer to the City where the bank's shares have soared by nearly 24 per cent since the appointment of the new chief executive was announced.

Barclays' shares closed up 16p at 1632p, brushing aside what would in normal circumstances have been seen as a disappointing set of results.

The group also announced a 16 per cent increase in dividend to 43p and pledged to maintain its share buyback programme at the current level of £500m a

year for 1999. Sir Peter said that following the reorganisation of the business into four key divisions the bank now had the structure it wanted.

He insisted that as far as mergers were concerned, the group had "nothing on the cards".

He said that the group would look at anything which was consistent with the strategy but was not "mesmerised" by the idea of a merger, adding: "We are interested in both the UK and abroad."

Sir Peter said that Barclays Capital, the bond-brokering division which lost £265m in last

August's financial turmoil, had exited the businesses that caused the problems and was now an integral part of the group.

He said that at Barclays Capital he expected this year to see a positive sign where there is a negative sign now.

The operation has pulled out of proprietary trading and reduced the risk profile of the business.

"Barclays Capital is a key part of the offering to large corporates," Sir Peter said. "It now has no businesses that do not support client businesses."

## Brown gets £12bn boost for Budget

BY LEA PATERSON

£7.5bn higher than December Departmental spending fell £2.1bn to £21.1bn.

January's bumper figures mean the Government has achieved a budget surplus of £1.7bn so far this fiscal year; £10bn more than at the same point last year. Although the Government tends to borrow both in February and March, only a slight year-on-year improvement would leave it with a surplus for the financial year of as much as £10bn, according to Mr Loynes. This is substantially higher than the £4.3bn forecast by the Treasury in November's pre-Budget statement, and would leave Mr Brown with considerable room for manoeuvre when he unveils the Budget on 9 March.

Other economists, however, were more gloomy, warning that monthly public finance figures tended to be volatile. Treasury officials also cautioned against reading too much into one month's data.

Although corporation tax receipts mean that January is always a good month for the public finances, the record monthly surplus of £12.4bn was substantially higher than City expectations.

Analysts said they had underestimated both the impact of self-assessment on income tax receipts and the fall in departmental spending.

Inland revenue receipts totalled £8.1bn in January, the Office for National Statistics said.

Outlook, page 19



High-street shoe shops cut prices in January by 6.8 per cent; more than at any time since 1947 Tom Craig

## Record fall in clothes and shoe prices

CLOTHING AND shoe prices fell more sharply in January than at any time since 1947, according to official figures released yesterday, writes Lea Paterson.

However, despite the record fall in some prices, the UK's underlying inflation rate remained at 2.6 per cent, above the Government's 2.5 per cent target, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said.

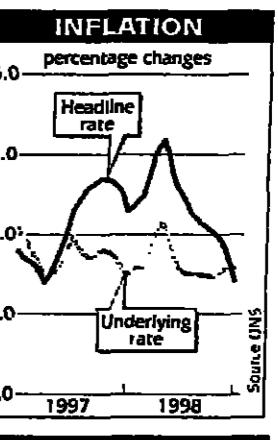
Despite these sharp falls, increases in non-seasonal food, prices and higher fuel and light charges meant the underlying rate of inflation remained unchanged at 2.6 per cent in January. This was the second con-

secutive month that underlying inflation overshot its target.

Analysts said the data made further interest rate cuts next month look less likely, and the pound hit a record high against the euro, closing at 68.45p.

The headline rate of inflation - which includes mortgage interest payments - fell 0.4 per cent to 2.6 per cent, the lowest rate since September 1996.

The drop was largely due to lower mortgage costs, analysts said, with lenders passing recent interest rate cuts onto consumers.



## ONS to cut 1,000 jobs in efficiency shake-up

BY LEA PATERSON

The reduction in head count. The departments most affected are likely to include personnel, finance, marketing and IT.

The steering group also recommended a shake-up in senior management at the agency, arguing that a strengthened management team and a new management structure would be needed to carry its proposals forward.

The ONS, which came under fire for its handling of controversial revisions to key earnings figures in the autumn, is also the subject of a series of separate reviews.

No redundancies should be necessary, according to the steering group, with natural wastage accounting for most of

the reduction in head count.

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## 18/MANAGED FUNDS

# Don't spend it all at once, Mr Brown

THE UK economy is changing out of all recognition. The Great Britain we all know and love is a high-inflation, high-unemployment nation, with a burgeoning budget deficit that doesn't go away, even in the good times. Over the past year or two, however, the economy has started to look disconcertingly different.

Inflation has been more or less at the Government's target for many months now. Employment is at a record high. And the public finances – as the latest set of figures show only too clearly – are in amazingly good shape. The Government's budget surplus hit a monthly record in January, leaving some economists to predict a surplus for the year of more than £10bn. This is more than double the level forecast by the Treasury back in November, and leaves Gordon Brown looking exceedingly comfortable going into next month's Budget.

Or does it? The UK's budget surplus is a notoriously unpredictable beast. As the difference between two staggeringly large numbers – total government receipts and total government expenditure – the series is prone to substantial fluctuations from month to month. It is also highly sensitive to cyclical variations. Even a small downturn in economic growth,



## OUTLOOK

which reduces income tax receipts and boosts spending on unemployment benefit, can leave a large hole in the Government's numbers.

Mr Brown's success with the public finances so far is a mixture of good management, good luck and good fortune. Although the Chancellor deserves to be congratulated for keeping tight control of the public purse, and for his bold move to grant the Bank of England independence, he has received a helping hand from unexpected quarters.

No one predicted, for example, the positive impact self-assessment would have on tax receipts. Timing has also been on the Chancellor's side. The economy reached its

growth peak in 1998 – it's all downhill from here.

This all means Mr Brown should approach yesterday's public finance figures with care, and resist the temptation to loosen the purse strings too far in the Budget. The British economy is doing surprisingly well. It would be a terrible shame to put it in jeopardy.

## Share options

SHAREHOLDER VALUE has long been a priority at Boots, and it rarely tires of lecturing all-comers on the subject – just don't mention Ward White, now eradicated from the record as if this destruction of value never happened. To this end, the company has scrapped share options for directors and replaced them with long-term bonuses based on total shareholder return. And at every results meeting Lord Blyth, the Boots chairman, gleefully flashes up a little slide showing just how well Boots is performing against its peer group on this measure (share price performance plus dividend payments).

To boot (forgive the pun), Boots has undertaken £200m of share buy-backs in the past three years and paid out a special dividend of £400m. Now

it has pushed out the envelope a little further.

Yesterday's announcement that Boots will satisfy its obligations on staff share options by buying existing shares in the market rather than issuing new ones is the kind of subject only an accountant can get excited about. The main benefit is that buying in existing shares rather than issuing new ones means the value of current shares is not diluted. It also means that the scheme is consistent with Boots' policy of reducing the number of shares in circulation and thereby enhancing earnings. And it recognises that share options as a form of remuneration carry a real cost. They should not be treated as manna from heaven.

Boots will as a consequence take a floss hit to the bottom line this year and £20m a year thereafter. The real cost of share options thus becomes disclosed and transparent. In most other schemes the cost of option payments is passed straight to the reserves and nobody bats an eyelid. This is seen as acceptable in the UK where the amount of staff compensation paid out in the form of options is fairly low.

The situation is very different in

the US, where nothing is done by halves. Many tech companies pay a high proportion of their wage bill in stock options, prompting growing concern about a potentially vast corporate liability which goes almost entirely unrecognised in accounting terms. The most oft-quoted example is Microsoft, which has created hundreds of Microsoft millionaires through the issue of options. The story goes that if Microsoft had recorded those as a cost to the profit and loss account, or paid them as salary, the business would have made a loss only a few years ago.

On this side of the Atlantic, the problem doesn't exist on anything like the same scale. That, of course, makes it a much easier one to deal with. Even so, full marks to Boots in grasping the nettle in this way.

## Boardroom pay

BEING ESSENTIALLY a Glastonian at heart, Tony Blair has always believed he ought to be able to rely on businessmen to lead by moral example and exercise restraint in the amount they pay themselves. Unfortunately it doesn't work that way in the modern world, if it ever did. Since Labour came to power, the pay dif-

ference between those at the top of the pile and those at the bottom has continued to widen.

The boardrooms of Britain's largest companies increasingly feel it necessary to pay themselves according to global, generally American, benchmarks, and there has been a continued news flow of multi-million pound remuneration packages for senior executives. Barclays is having to pay Mike O'Neill an American-style package of salary, options, shadow options and bonuses to persuade him to take the chief executive's job; he refused to come for any less.

If executives cannot be relied upon to exercise restraint, what can the Government do about it? Like John Major, it could refuse offending businesses their going, but that doesn't seem to do the trick either. Nor can Labour, having fully converted to the cause of free market economics, realistically impose restraint centrally through Act of Parliament. Alternatively it could tax shareholders to ratchet down the salaries of their executive officers in their own best interests. We can all point to examples of excess in the boardroom, but if the effect is to make British boardroom pay uncompetitive when set against the alternatives, then that would plainly be a bad thing.

# EU raids eight banks in exchange rate probe

EIGHT of Europe's best known banks, including lenders in Germany, France, Italy and Spain were raided yesterday in a European Union-wide investigation into charges for exchanging notes and coins within the 11-eurozone.

The European Commission said it also sent letters to banks in virtually all of the 11 nations demanding information on their tariffs. The move is the most dramatic evidence yet of concern in Brussels that consumers are not benefiting from one of the main selling points of the euro – the locking of exchange rates.

Karel Van Miert, Europe's Competition Commissioner, was seeking evidence to support claims of collusion and anti-competitive behaviour among banks. Mr Van Miert told journalists that the banks raided were Deutsche Bank AG, Dresdner Bank AG, Credit Agricole, Société Générale, Banca Commerciale Italiana, Cassa di Risparmio delle Province Lombarde SpA, Banco Bilbao Viz-

aya SA and Argentaria Corp Bancaria de Espana SA.

The commission added that the investigators were "not made especially welcome in some places", citing France as an example. Since January the commission has said, received indications that "some kind of concertation" was taking place, perhaps through national banking associations and at the European level.

Mr Van Miert added that he singled out the eight banks that were raided because "a choice had to be made" and there was a "likelihood" evidence would be found.

Transaction charges have become especially controversial because the advent of the euro has ended the publication of different rates for buyers and sellers. Banks argue that the differential between the two rates allowed them to make a profit from the transaction – some

that now has to be done solely through commission charges.

However, investigations by members of the European Parliament suggest some commissions have been as high as 3.75 per cent.

A Deutsche Bank spokesman admitted that two members of the commission's anti-trust committee and one representative of the German federal anti-trust office had paid the bank an "informational" visit.

The commission is worried about the reaction of travellers in the eurozone, as they realise the benefits of the single currency are slow to materialise.

They inquired how we determine charges for exchanging national currencies and we provided information. There was no

raid," a spokesman said. The spokesman also denied the allegation, saying there had not been collusion over the charges.

Banco Bilbao Vizcaya SA said it was confident it would be vindicated, adding that its commission charges were the minimum.

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# Banks edge Footsie towards all-time high

ONCE AGAIN Footsie inched towards its all-time high, climbing 85.4 points to 6,108.6. Since peaking at 6,179 in July, the index has made more than half-a-dozen attempts to establish a new top.

But although it managed a trading high last month, it has found it impossible to strike a new closing record. Banks, helped along by Barclays, were behind the latest advance.

Barclays rose 102p to 1,622p and National Westminster Bank 97p to 1,379p. Bank of Scotland was 36p higher at 909.5p and Woolwich 17.5p at 365.5p. The stock market latched on to Barclays' increased dividend. With interest rates falling, higher dividend payments are achieving even greater significance than in the past.

There is also the growing possibility of takeover action among the banking community. Last week Lloyds TSB, up 22p to 904.5p, displayed its acquisitive inclinations and although Barclays will, at least for the time being, mark time

STEPHEN DEAN has sold most of his shares in Environmental Property Services.

A 29.6 per cent stake has been picked up at 8.9p a share by investors led by Lupus Associates, where Charles Ryder, formerly of Magellan Industries, is a leading light.

Mr Dean intends to concentrate on builder Artisan (UK), which split from EPS last year.

EPS held at 9.75p and Artisan edged ahead 0.25p to 4.75p.

until new chief executive Michael O'Neill gets his feet under the boardroom table, the group will not ignore future consolidation.

Mergers between clearing and mortgage banks are thought to be the most likely development although more cross-border deals are also expected.

Allied Irish Banks is regarded by many as the next bank to fall to a bid, with Lloyds now the favourite to strike. The shares have had a volatile run and rose 30.5p to 1,132.5p in brisk trading.

New York's early strength was a positive influence and there were also vague hopes that perhaps Tokyo's despair is coming to an end.

The banking excitement helped swell trading volume back above 1 billion shares with Centrica, the gas group,

## MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

the most heavily traded with Seag putting volume at 24.1 million. Supporting shares were firm. The mid cap index rose 23.7 to 5,209.0 and the small cap 7.5 to 2,248.1.

Catties, the consumer credit group, underlined the widespread appeal of financials, scoring a 13p gain to a peak of 759.5p. Year's results are due next month. They are expected to come out at around 248m, against the 255.1m achieved in the previous year.

Amescap, the fund manager, was the best performing Footsie constituent, gaining 44.5p to 607.5p.

Tobacco shares continued to be puffed higher following the Government's decision that the National Health Service cannot sue cigarette makers. Imperial Tobacco swiped 43p higher to 754.5p and Galbraith 21p to 444p. British

expect acquisitive ITG, the AIM-traded Irish telecom and computer group, to disclose another takeover soon, possibly possibly.

Only last week the company paid 27.65m in cash and shares for Computers in Ireland.

Last year ITG, which was started in 1989, put through four takeovers.

The group's shares firmed to 282.5p; they have been as high as 422.5p since arriving on AIM nearly two years ago.

dealt 29p higher at 489p, another peak.

Victory Corporation, a Richard Branson company, held at 6.5p as it settled a near £2m debt owned by Cadore, the trendy retailer where Mr Branson is a shareholder.

Cadore now owes the cash to Victory. Because of trading difficulties, the retailer's shares were suspended last month at 0.75p.

Booker, the cash and carry chain, responded to the £2m exceptional charge following the disposal of a wholesaling business by dropping 8.5p to 56p. The shares were 296p last year. Low & Bonar, the packaging group, fell 15p to 158p after losses and a grim trading statement.

ScottishPower gained 8p to 602.5p on the appointment of Bill Allan as chief executive of its telecom arm. Goldman

SEAG VOLUME: 1,068n  
SEAG TRADES: 83,374  
GIILS: 114.67 +0.48

American Tobacco was up 16.5p to 612.5p in sympathy.

Eurotunnel rose 1p to 84p on rumoured state building. French financier Vincent Bollore denied he was interested.

Marks & Spencer firmed to 367.5p ahead of an investment presentation tomorrow by the new chief executive, Peter Salterbury. United News & Media, holding City briefings, was flat at 60p.

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## SPORT

'I like Giggs and Beckham. And I think the lad at Arsenal, Overmars, is a good two-footed player, very similar to what I was'

# Sir Tom the pride of Preston

WHILE I wait for Sir Tom Finney to arrive, the receptionist at Preston North End's Deepdale football ground tells me that a stretch of Deepdale Road - from the Territorial Army building to just past Sainsbury's - has recently been renamed Sir Tom Finney Way. She then asks if I would like to contribute to a fund to raise money for a statue of Sir Tom Finney. At this point, Sir Tom Finney arrives, having safely negotiated Sir Tom Finney Way, and graciously agrees to pose for the *Independent's* photographer in front of the Tom Finney stand.

A master of understatement might say that Preston is rather proud of Sir Tom Finney. When his knighthood was announced last year, the Lancashire Evening Post printed a 48-page tribute. And North End's deputy chairman was not being over-sentimental when he said "for the town's senior citizens, it is the news they've been waiting for for many a year."

The object of this veneration is a spiky 76-year-old with a kindly pink face and snow-white hair, a little plumper than the 10-stone wafers who left defenders kicking air and was described by no less a judge than Bill Shankly - who played alongside him in the Preston team between 1946 and 1949 - as "probably the greatest footballer who will ever be born." The story goes that when George Best was at his peak, Shankly was asked if he thought Best was a better player than Finney. "Aye, he is, just about," growled Shankly. "But don't forget that Tom is 50-odd."

It seems incongruous, in a way, that such a homely, unassuming man should have inspired so many cracking after-dinner anecdotes, one of the best of which is told by another old Preston team-mate, Tommy Docherty. When I remind him of it, Finney chuckles.

"That one's quite true," he says. "Tommy came down from Celtic, and had a fairly good season with us. In those days we used to line up in the corridor before going in to the manager to find out our terms for the following year. I went in to see Bill Scott, the manager, and he said 'I'd be on the same terms as the year before, £12 a week during the season, and £10 a week in the summer, which was known as 12-and-10. Tommy went in after me, and was told he'd be on 12-and-8. I'm not signing," he said. "I've just found out that Finney's on 12-and-10." The manager couldn't believe it. "But Finney's a far better player than me," he said. "Not in the bloody summer he's not," Tommy said."

Sir Tom Finney grew up in a council house near Deepdale, and first dis-



### THE BRIAN VINER INTERVIEW

played his sublime skills in 30-a-side kickabouts on a potholed patch of waste ground. His father, an electric board clerk, had him apprenticed to a firm of plumbers when he was 14. The following year, Preston North End invited him to join the ground staff, but his father said he had to finish his apprenticeship first. He was devastated, but the old man was right. Tom Finney Ltd. set up just after the war, eventually employing 60 staff, and has given Finney - who hung up his boots in 1960, the year before football's £20-a-week maximum wage was abolished - a comfortable retirement.

He finally joined the Preston

*'I've never played against such a good side. We lost 7-1 and it was racehorses against carthorses'*

ground staff in 1937, and was instead left in the under-18 team until one fateful day when he stood in for the injured outside-right and played a blinder. When Preston won the 1946-47 FA Cup final against Arsenal - a victory wiped from the official records by the war - Finney was on the right wing, tormenting the Arsenal and England captain and full-back, Eddie Hapgood. A year later he was conscripted into the army.

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# Figuring out winners the Whitley way

Punters are turning to a Yorkshire-based computer analyst in the quest for winners. By Greg Wood

THE THICK, smartly-bound book which dropped through several hundred letterboxes last week is not - if you will excuse the pun - the most obviously racey of reads. *Computer Racing Form*, an annual production by the organisation Racing Research, is an analysis of the 1998 Flat season, crunched into 467 pages of closely-printed names and numbers. Michael Crichton is its not.

To its devotees, however, the annual and in particular the daily ratings and racecards produced by John Whitley, Racing Research's founder, are as essential a part of the process of betting as a pen and a blank slip.

Whitley, a mathematics graduate, was an employee of *Timeform* for nine years, until he left in 1983 to develop his own ideas about handicapping and speed figures with the help of some serious computing power, in Brighouse, West Yorkshire.

Many punters believe that finding winners is an art rather than a science, a matter of instinct and emotion rather than cold analysis. Whitley begs to differ. "Our methods are entirely objective," he says. "We have a database which is basically all

a human with a pencil and paper years, probably decades.

The end results are speed and form ratings for every run by every horse, which are then supplied to Whitley's clients in the form of racecards, for a fee varying from £5 to £3 per meeting depending on the length of your subscription. Some of his clients have taken every racecard since Racing Research was founded 15 years ago.

"We look at it as raw material for people who are already racing experts," he says. "We don't say there's anything magical about them. They are a starting point before taking into account all the usual sofifications which relate to any race."

In other words, considerations such as distance, going and track must still be borne in mind. Nor, this being racing, are there any guarantees. There are, however, many racing professionals - including bookmakers - who always turn to Whitley's ratings before they open the form book. At the five-day stage before the Tripleprint Gold Cup at Cheltenham in December, for instance, they found that

ley leads the results of every race in Britain into his computer. The machine then looks at what it already knows about the horses concerned, and all those that have raced against them since 1993, in the light of this new form. It then decides how relevant the information is - recent form, clearly, being more important than old - and reassesses its opinion of every horse in training accordingly. Whitley, though, is never entirely happy with the numbers his computers give him. "My in-

terest is in developing the mathematical side of the systems," he says. "We add algorithms to the ones we already use, which improves the sophistication of what is already there." Racing and betting will never be an easy way to make a living, but for those who can afford it, Whitley's analysis at least ensures that they will walk into Tattersalls with several thousand pounds-worth of silicon on their side.

Racing Research 01484710979.

## Three horses killed

THREE HORSES were killed at Sedgefield yesterday after a pile-up involving nine of the 15 runners in the 4.30, a novices' chase. Problems began at the first fence when Joss Bay fell, bringing down Skane River and Sliema Creek. All three then ran loose in the opposite direction round the course until they collided with the rest of the field at the second last fence. Another six horses were brought down. Royal Scimitar was killed together with Floss The Boss and Skane River.

Hunter chase pointers will

appear tomorrow

RESULTS

### LEICESTER

Gong: Chase Good to Soft (Good in placed Hurdles - Soft (Heavy patches)

2.20 (cm 41 100ds handicap chase)

1. REAGANESQUE ... R Farrant 9-2

2. HENRY'S DANCER ... D Phibbs 12-1

3. DANCING SISTER ... H Oliver 7-1

Also ran: 3-1 for River Bay, 1-2 Swayne-

soft (48), 9-1 Cattadio, 10-1 Gareth-

12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22,

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Football: United and Arsenal meetings have an underlying mood of aggression that often escalates into violence

# Belligerent night at Old Trafford

BY GUY HODGSON

WHEN ALEX FERGUSON strayed into his private thoughts and "off the record" territory last month it was to Arsenal he headed. "Belligerent" was how he described last year's Double winners, a two-edged accusation if ever there was one.

No team which contains the spiky talents of Roy Keane and Nicky Butt can be labelled supine so the Manchester United manager was also wandering among pots and kettles. Winners are belligerent and both Ferguson's team and Arsenal have their fair share of what are euphemistically called "winners".

Amid this smokescreen of accusation, Ferguson did put his finger on one fact. When United meet Arsenal there is an underlying mood of aggression and frequently it escalates into violence. If tonight's Premiership meeting at Old Trafford included a sending-off no one would be surprised.

The strange thing is the supporters of both clubs have reserved their utmost loathing for nearer targets, Liverpool and Tottenham. Meanwhile, the players and the managers have been training their sights on each other.

The managers clearly are not bosom buddies, an atmosphere that began when Arsène Wenger criticised Ferguson's perennial moan about fixture congestion in his first season at Highbury, but the players go back much further.

The teams have a history of antipathy. You could return to the Sixties and examine the seething bile that would erupt whenever Denis Law and Ian Ure laid eyes on each other (ironically they would later become team-mates at Old Trafford) but that is archaeological. There are more pertinent and recent relics of rancour.

Only Tony Adams remains from the Arsenal team which surrendered a 17-game unbeaten run at Old Trafford in January 1987, a game in which David Rocastle was sent off and six players were booked – and those were times when cautions were not showered like confetti by referees.

The traditions have been taken up by their successors. In 1988 there were reports of a scuffle in the Highbury tunnel in the aftermath of an explosive FA Cup tie lost 2-1 by United after Brian McClair blazed a last-minute penalty into the North Bank.

Nigel Winterburn had angered the United players that night with over-the-top celebrations and it probably was not a coincidence that the Arsenal full-back was to the fore at the



Arsenal and United were involved in a 21-man brawl in 1990 (above) and Peter Schmeichel (below) lies injured after Ian Wright's two-footed tackle three years ago. Empics

most notorious of incidents involving the clubs in October 1990.

A 21-man brawl broke out during the Gunners' 1-0 win at Old Trafford (only David Seaman failed to get involved) and as a consequence Arsenal were deducted two points and United one. Both clubs were also fined £50,000 by the Football Association and warned about their future conduct.

Matters simmered rather than flared – although Eric Cantona was sent off on one controversial evening at Highbury – until three years ago when lingering hostility became embodied in Peter Schmeichel and Ian Wright.

A late tackle by the striker angered the Dane, who was later accused of making racist comments by Wright.

Later in the season Wright made a two-footed tackle which Ferguson called "a disgrace" and the FA and the Professional Footballers' Association became involved. Even now

Schmeichel will not talk about either incident although friends have let it be known he was very upset about the racism allegations.

Tensions heightened since last season when Arsenal beat United home and away en route to their first title since their point-penalised season of 1990-91 and were not soothed at Highbury in September when the latter produced their worst performance of the season, going down 3-0. Not for the first time the visitors ended with only 10 men. But being sent off.

Tonight's game is unlikely to be less aggressive because both clubs regard the other as the most likely to stop them winning the championship this season. "If you finish above Manchester United you will win the League," Tony Adams said last week, while Ferguson fears Arsenal if only because they now know what it takes to win the title.

Ferguson's comments to the

Sunday Times last month, for which he has since apologised, will have thrown a match into the acetylene. "I'll tell you what they do," he said, "and I've spoken to other managers about this and they all agree. When Arsenal are not doing well in a game they turn it into a battle to try to make the opposition lose concentration."

"They do that all the time. The number of fights involving Arsenal is more than Wimbledon in their heyday."

Ferguson said those comments were off the record although, pertinently, he did not deny making them, and in the unlikely event of Wenger needing to fire up his troops this evening then pinning the above to the dressing-room wall would be as good a way as any.

And if the game is won by a controversial goal this evening? Both managers will contact the FA and insist the game is replayed. And hell will start advertising skiing holidays.



Kanu is ready for United baptism

BY BILL PIERCE

MARC OVERMARS last night backed the Nigerian Nwankwo Kanu to handle the pressure of making his Premiership debut against Arsenal's main title rivals Manchester United tonight.

Overmars and Kanu were the men involved in Arsenal's controversial FA Cup fifth-round "winning goal" against Sheffield United on Saturday. Although both players have apologised for breaking the unwritten law of sportsmanship in combining to score Arsenal's second goal against the Blades, they can expect a rough reception from the Old Trafford crowd.

"It will not be a problem," Overmars said. "Kanu and I both know we did not mean to do something wrong. It was purely a reflex reaction and it took about 20 seconds to realise what had happened."

Overmars believes Kanu, who looks set to replace the suspended Dennis Bergkamp, in possibly the most defining match of the title campaign so far, will be a handful for United – who include Jaap Stam, the Arsenal winger's Netherlands team-mate. "I played for two years in Holland with Kanu for Ajax and he is a big, big talent," said Overmars. "People over here who perhaps do not know too much about him will soon see how good he is."

Though Emmanuel Petit is suspended, the Arsenal manager, Arsène Wenger, has his captain, Tony Adams, and full-back Lee Dixon back from the head injuries they sustained in England's defeat against France last week, but Martin Keown is still out with hamstring trouble. Stephen Hughes looks set to deputise for Petit after Remi Garde damaged an ankle in Saturday's Cup tie.

The Manchester United manager, Alex Ferguson, has ruled Ryan Giggs out of his plans even though he is nearing full recovery from his hamstring injury. Denis Irwin is Ferguson's biggest concern. The Republic of Ireland full-back has a groin injury so Philip Neville is standing by. Roy Keane and Paul Scholes have given United a boost as they return to the squad after each serving a one-match ban.

Meanwhile, United have signed 17-year-old Bojan Jordic on a four-year contract after the Swedish youngster was spotted playing for Bromma-Pojakarna, a lower-league side from the Stockholm area.

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## Dublin plays through pain

BY TOMMY STANIFORTH

DION DUBLIN will go through the pain barrier to try to put Aston Villa's Premiership title challenge back on course, but his manager, John Gregory, may yet force the striker to have surgery which could keep him out of the game for several weeks.

Dublin will ignore a troublesome groin problem to lead Villa's attack in the absence of Stan Collymore against Leeds on Saturday.

Gregory admits that the performances of his £5.75m signing from Coventry have been badly affected by the injury. He says that instant surgery would be the best option even though Dublin is willing to delay going under the surgeon's knife until the end of the campaign.

"Dion is not doing himself justice," Gregory said. "He's had rest and missed a couple of games but it hasn't cured the problem. It is still there."

JODY MORRIS expects a tough Premiership battle when Chelsea meet Blackburn at Stamford Bridge tonight. The midfielder has established himself in Gianluca Vialli's squad and is looking forward to putting his wits against Brian Kidd's resurgent team.

Chelsea have slipped out of their fluent early-season form, but Morris feels Saturday's 1-0 FA Cup win at Sheffield Wednesday may give them the right tonic as the season enters its crucial final stages. "I thought we played really well on Saturday, and the manager was really buzzing after the game," said 20-year-old Morris.

"Hopefully we've turned the corner after a bad patch. All of

us believe that Blackburn are a tough team. They can play a physical game, but I think there are enough players in our team known for their physical attributes as well and I'm confident we can come away with something from the game."

Vialli's team have stumbled since topping the Premiership and now have to claw back ground on Manchester United. Long-term injuries to Gustavo Poyet, Pierluigi Casiraghi and Tore Andre Flo and the transfer of Brian Laudrup have not helped matters.

Vialli has been the first to acknowledge loss of form but the Italian has seen his team grind out points while playing indifferently. As a result Chelsea are

second in the League and alive on two cup fronts. The Hillsborough win booked a place in the last eight of the FA Cup, and the Blues continue the tradition of their European Cup/Winners' Cup crown next month.

Fixtures will come thick and fast over the coming months, and Vialli knows the hectic end of season can catch clubs out. "We like to play well, but it's not easy because of the fixture schedule," he said.

"It's nice to see that after a few poor games we are now playing well. This is the way we would like to play. But it's not always possible because you play so many matches in England. But we hope from now to the end of the season we will

keep giving good performances and keep winning."

Dennis Wise starts his latest ban against Blackburn. He was sent off for the fourth time this season in the FA Cup fourth-round replay win against Oxford.

Eddie Newton, Bernard Lambourne, Andy Myers and Mark Nichols are all added to Saturday's squad, while Morris is likely to continue in midfield. The England Under-21 international has no intention of stepping aside for any of his more illustrious team-mates.

Morris told Chelsea Club:

## Phillips hopes to stand tall

BY MARK PIERSON

THE SUNDERLAND striker Kevin Phillips is hoping to strike another blow for the little man as his side returns to the Worthington Cup semi-final action tonight.

The 5ft 7in striker saw Tony Cottee – just an inch taller – give Leicester a 2-1 first-leg lead at the Stadium of Light last month with two instinctive finishes.

While the former Watford player knows that his side are the underdogs, he is determined to disprove the assertion that big is necessarily beautiful. "Tony Cottee is the sort of player I look up to," said Phillips without a hint of irony.

"Since I've been in the North-east, people have mentioned me in the same bracket and as the same sort of player. If I can achieve what he's achieved in his career then I'll be more than happy."

"It just goes to show that not everyone has to be six foot to succeed. Tony's a great role model for the smaller lads."

Phillips, who missed three months of the current season with a toe injury, has nevertheless scored double figures after his 35-goal contribution in 1997-98.

His late penalty winner at Bristol City on Saturday took him to 11 but he knows he will be facing one of the more formidable defences at Eller Street. "Matt Elliott, Steve Walsh and Gerry Taggart are the three biggest centre-halves I've ever played against," he said.

"We've got big men up front in Niall Quinn and Danny Dichio, if he plays, so we can challenge them, but they're very strong."

"They've also got two good central midfield players and Emile Heskey and Cottee up front, who were a different class on the night up here. But if we can keep them out then we stand a good chance."

Gavin McCann's late goal allowed the First Division leaders to just about keep the title alive and Phillips is confident that Martin O'Neill's men can expect a tough battle. "We've given ourselves a chance and we'll go there and enjoy it," he said.

Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, acknowledges that Leicester are favourites to reach the final, but refuses to write off his side's chances of reaching the final at Wembley next month.

"We have to go to Leicester with a positive attitude but I know my players are up for it and you never know what can happen," he said.

"Leicester are a good footballing side and they have a positive manager but they might freeze in front of their own supporters."

"I think we have played quite well against three Premiership clubs in cup competitions this season. We were unlucky at Blackburn in the FA Cup and while Leicester probably deserved their first-leg win, we are not out of it."

Sunderland have bounced back from three successive defeats, albeit two to Premiership clubs, to take maximum points from games against Swindon and Bristol City to consolidate their position at the top of the First Division.

## Morris backs Chelsea's cause

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# Mellor argues to preserve status quo

DAVID MELLOR, the former Tory MP who is now the chairman of the Football Task Force, explained to a court yesterday the *raison d'être* of St O' Str., the Radio Five Live football phone-in he hosts on Saturday evenings. "We try to make journeys a shade less wearisome," he said.

The statement seemed especially apt as Mellor proceeded to turn two hours of evidence in what has essentially been a dull journey - through a maze strew with legal wranglings about contracts for televised football - into something

## FOOTBALL

By NICK HARRIS

considerably less wearisome. Using his platform as the supporters' friend ("I have my own views, but not out of line with fans' opinions") and his practised skills as an advocate, he imposed his larger than life personality onto the proceedings.

"There is all this going on," he asked on several occasions, affecting a bluster in the face of protracted cross-examination questions. "I've answered the same question in three forms

already," he appealed at another point to the Judge, Mr Justice Ferris, as if he could not wait to get to what he considered the core issue of the case. By the time he stepped down from the stand at around 12.30pm, there were whispers in the press gallery along the lines of "if this'd been a boxing match, it would've been abandoned for the safety of Mellor's opponent."

The opponent in question was Geoffrey Vos, QC, representing the Office of Fair Trading in its case against the Premier League, Sky TV, and

the BBC over the League's right to negotiate television deals collectively on behalf of its 20 clubs. Mellor, called as witness for the League, was there to argue why the status quo was the best way to maintain football's current good fortune.

Having confirmed he had been an MP for 12 years, a minister for nine and the chairman of the Task Force since August 1997, Mellor had also furnished the court with the information that he pays £2,500 per season for his executive season ticket at Chelsea. "It's like the Ritz," he said, denying that access to the

best seats at Stamford Bridge club was a closed shop. "Open to everyone, you know." And then he got down to the business of mauling his inquisitor.

"People don't like to be criticised," Mellor said of the OFT, when Vos suggested that a Task Force report - overseen by Mellor - had been biased in suggesting an OFT win in the case would harm football. "And when they are, they say those being critical don't know what they're talking about."

He said football had a right to maximise its income. "What is valuable for the purchasers

is the monopoly, and what is valuable for the game is the money that the sale of television rights brings in," he said. Clubs such as Leicester which currently receives around £5.5m per season - around 38 per cent of its total income - from television, would lose out in a free-for-all, Mellor said. Clubs such as Leicester, he said, meant every club except a small elite.

When challenged by Vos that television income could still be fairly redistributed if individual deals were introduced, Mellor replied: "That is a presentational refuge point you've taken

which is not convincing." He added: "I place more confidence in the central direction of the Premier League than the individual goodwill of the clubs."

When asked to concede that individual sale of rights would at least lead to competition, Mellor replied: "It's not called competition. It's called nonsense. What is the value of something everybody's got?"

Mellor did concede that Sky's dominance in the football market might perhaps lead to inflated prices for televised football, but he added: "If prop-

## Kenwright is backed by Smith

By KIERAN DALEY

tack on his former West Ham team-mate, Eyal Berkovic.

West Ham insisted yesterday that their Chilean defender Javier Margas had not gone AWOL. The club's chief executive, Peter Storie, says they gave their blessing for Margas to return to his native South America for a cartilage operation shortly before Christmas.

The Manchester City manager, Joe Royle, has taken the captaincy from Jamie Pollock in the wake of his third sending-off of the season at Bournemouth on Saturday. Pollock, who faces a three-match ban, was also sent off in August and September.

Premiership strugglers Southampton have signed the 22-year-old striker Marian Palars from the Latvian champions, Skonto Riga, for a reported £200,000 and are now waiting for a work permit.

Mark Viduka finally made his debut for Celtic yesterday - and marked it with a goal. The Australian striker, who controversially returned home before Christmas, immediately after signing for the Scottish champions, was target as an average player for the under-21 team who played Motherwell.

The former Doncaster Rovers owner Ken Richardson has been charged with misdeeds by the Football Association following his conviction for conspiracy to commit arson. Richardson was convicted at Sheffield Crown Court last year for his part in the plot to burn down Doncaster's stand. He has parted company with the club since their relegation from the Football League.

Liverpool have contacted the Football Association to ask for the red card Jamie Carragher received at Charlton on Saturday to be reconsidered. Carragher was sent off by the Birmingham referee Mike Reed following a clash with Charlton's Martin Pringle during the Londoners' 1-0 victory at The Valley.

Wimbledon have missed the 14-day appeal deadline to dispute John Hartson's £20,000 fine and three-match suspension for his training-ground at-

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The soldiers had survived a

furious opening salvo from the

former Dark Blue strik-

er gracefully collected a loose ball on the half-way line and with little effort glided through the Army defence in a 40-yard dash, drew the goalkeeper and placed the ball into an empty net.

The arrival into the battle of England's Guy Fordham after 18 minutes saw renewed Army assaults, with the equaliser coming a minute later at a penalty corner from the Army captain, Ian Jennings, who at

the weekend became the first to score 200 National League goals.

The first of two solo goals

from Cambridge's Belgian

Thierry Gruslin sent the stu-

dents to the interval with a 2-1

Gareth Weir scored the first

of his two goals eight minutes

after the resumption before

Jennings claimed his second.

Gruslin's and Weir's second

goals were separated by a well

taken goal from Scotland's Richard Forsyth for the Army's third.

Forsyth, who completed the

Army's useful midfield along

with Jennings and Fordham,

was unlucky with earlier efforts, particularly a fierce drive

against the upright a minute

into the second half.

Cambridge, who had left

their captain Rob Hudson on his sick bed at home, will have

found the game useful prepa-

The Army's Darren Bosher goes to ground in his attempt to tackle Cambridge University's captain, Alastair Cotton, at Milton Keynes yesterday

Robert Hallam

## Cambridge exploit Army's poor defence

### HOCKEY

By BILL COLWILL  
at Milton Keynes

Cambridge University 5  
Army 3

students and were just beginning to get back into the game when Adam Laird snatched an improbable opening goal in the eighth minute.

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### BASKETBALL

NBA: New York 78 Detroit 65; Miami 95

New Jersey 72; Phoenix 115 Denver 106;

Utah 120 Sacramento 112 (ot); Portland 99

Dallas 84; Golden State 101 Minnesota 59

### CRICKET

ASIAN TEST CHAMPIONSHIP  
INDIA v PAKISTAN (Calcutta)  
First Test: India won toss  
First Innings: India 240, Pakistan 140  
Second Innings: India 240, Pakistan 140  
Shahid Afridi b Srinivas 0  
Shahid Afridi c Mongia b Srinivas 4  
Iqbal Ahmed b Srinivas 0  
Mohammad Wasim c Mongia b Afridi 5  
Wasim Youhana c Afridi 2  
Saeed Anwar c Afridi 2  
Ahsanullah b Afridi 1  
Mohd. Aslam c Afridi 1  
Wasim Akram c Afridi 1  
Ahsanullah b Afridi 1  
Shoaib Akbar c Afridi 1  
Wasim Akram not out 4  
Shoaib Akbar c Afridi 1  
Wasim Akram not out 4  
Extras (11b, 1w, 6nb) 100  
Total: 315; Target: 315  
Result: India won by 10 wickets

SECOND TEST CHAMPIONSHIP  
INDIA v PAKISTAN (Calcutta)  
First Test: India won toss  
First Innings: India 240, Pakistan 140  
Second Innings: India 240, Pakistan 140  
Shahid Afridi b Srinivas 0  
Shahid Afridi c Mongia b Srinivas 4  
Iqbal Ahmed b Srinivas 0  
Mohammad Wasim c Mongia b Afridi 5  
Wasim Youhana c Afridi 2  
Saeed Anwar c Afridi 2  
Ahsanullah b Afridi 1  
Wasim Akram c Afridi 1  
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# SPORT

WOODWARD CALLS FOR WILKINSON P23 • PRESTON'S LIVING LEGEND P22

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## Keegan may be England coach today

FOOTBALL  
By PHIL SHAW

home in the North-east.

The talks are understood to have centred on two main areas. One was Keegan's insistence that if he takes the job, he wants absolute control of the England set-up, from who works alongside him as assistant and backroom staff with the senior squad to the composition of Under-21 and B squads.

Keegan's perception of what the post entails runs contrary to the concept of continuity espoused by Wilkinson. The FA's technical director took over as England's caretaker coach after the fall of Glenn Hoddle and supervised the side for last week's home defeat by France and efforts were made yesterday to find a compromise that does not undermine the power base of the former Leeds United manager.

The other sticking point, which is believed to concern Keegan more, has been his determination not to break his contract with Fulham as chief operating officer. It still has 18 months, and he believes he could juggle the two roles. The FA's acting chairman, Geoff Thompson, has been adamant that the 43-year-old former England captain would have to leave the Second Division promotion favourites by the summer.

Whether Fulham's owner, Mohamed al-Fayed, has now given Keegan his blessing in the national interest is unclear. However, it is thought that the discussions have brought the parties closer to a mutually agreeable solution.

If a compromise has indeed been reached and Keegan is paraded at Lancaster Gate within the next 24 hours, his first match in charge will be England's make-or-break qualifier for Euro 2000 against Poland at Wembley on 27 March. The European campaign resumes in June against Sweden and Bulgaria, while there is also a friendly in Hungary on 28 April, when Fulham could well be at a critical point in their season.

Arsène Wenger, who figured in early betting as the man most likely to be England's first foreign coach, came up with a light-hearted solution to the club-v-country conflict yesterday. "Maybe the answer would be for Fayed to buy all the top England players for Fulham," the Arsenal manager said.

Wenger also shed light on why the leading Premiership managers have not been rushing to fill the hot seat vacated by Hoddle. "Being an international manager used to be the most prestigious job of all, but times have changed. Club competitions have become more prestigious than international games, apart from one month every four years for the World

1900s – and the Busby Babes Liam Whelan, Jackie Blanchflower and David Pegg, Johnny Carey, who led United to their first post-war League and FA Cup successes, failed to make the top 50.

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THE INDEPENDENT

17 February 1999

# BUSINESS REVIEW

## THE MAN WHO OWNS CYBERSPACE OR HOW MASAYOSHI SON NETTED \$15bn IN FOUR EARTH YEARS

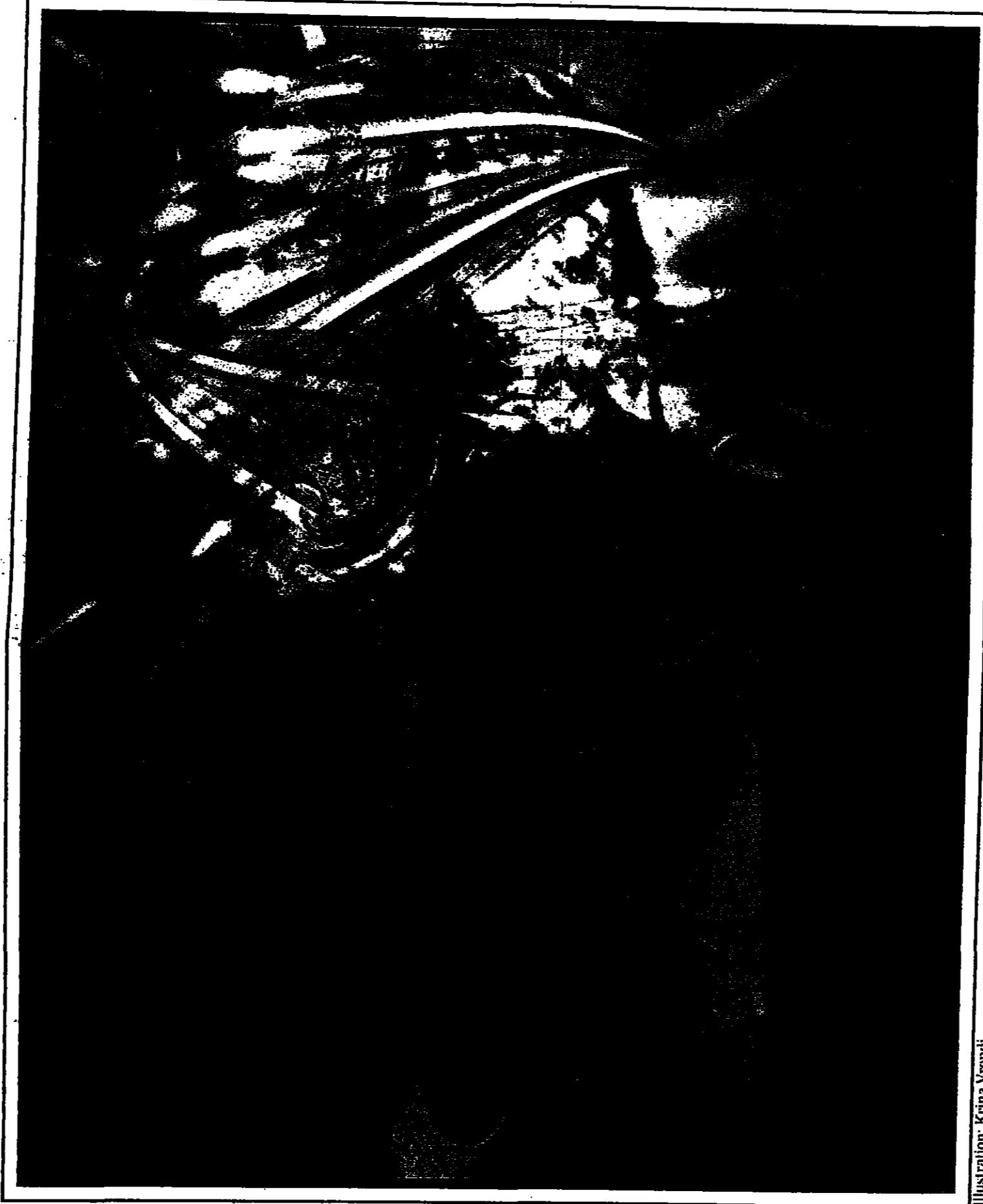


Illustration: Krupa Vaidya

**Inside:** The superstore that ate America, coming to a high street near you, page 4  
Can DMGT survive the FTSE 100? page 5

The adman's adman revealed, page 6

**Plus:** Hamish McRae, Diane Coyle, Derek Pain, Jo Davis and The Trader

# Employ clever people and make work fun

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One of the great boom areas in international business is organising events - product launches, "thank you" for good customers, days out for staff and their families, and so on. If done well, they can be wonderful; done badly they can be touchingly embarrassing. The one thing all have in common is that events are expensive, time consuming and just a little dangerous.

So why do companies take this risk? This answer I think lies in two words: "human capital".

Most businesses are very well aware that their key asset lies in the minds of the people they employ. Add up the identifiable value of the total assets of any company, the factories, the product stream and the licensing agreements. Then look at

the company's market capitalisation. There is invariably a gap, sometimes a huge one. In the case of some of the fastest-growing types of business - investment banking, management consultancy, software development - there are virtually no conventional assets at all. All the value is in the people.

This raises a string of profound questions for company leaders. How do you manage these assets? How do you build the stock of human capital? How do you extract the value of this capital for shareholders? Or, at its simplest, how do you get clever people to work for you?

Unsurprisingly, companies produce a string of different answers to these questions. Many devise elaborate incentive programmes, which has been reasonably easy in a strong share market; give people shares. One company, Skandia Life in Sweden, has tried to measure the stock of capital in the heads of its employees and deploy the knowledge as widely as possible across the group. It produces a human capital report alongside its

financial reports to make its commitment more explicit.

Other groups like Andersen Worldwide, the accountants and consultants, or Motorola, the communications group, have "universities" which are devoted to improving the skill level of their employees. Enormous resources are put into this: the Andersen campus near Chicago feels just like an exclusive US liberal arts college.

Quite aside from the general benefit to the group of putting resources into training, there is a simple business rationale for such ventures. I once asked an executive why his company spent so much on training. What stopped people taking this expensive training and going off and working for some one else?

"You don't understand," he replied. "It is because we spend so much on training that people stay with us. We employ clever people who know their value and who could walk out of the door whenever they want. But provided we go on increasing that value - adding to their human capital - they will



**HAMISH MCRAE**

**The hardest trick of all for companies is to create a greenhouse where staff can develop new businesses under the protection and with the support of the parent**

stay with us. It is the moment we stop that they take their brains away."

Staff retention is a wholly respectable reason for paying attention to training. But every company can devise a cutting-edge training scheme. Every company can develop incentive schemes. And I suppose every company can dream up yet more glamorous venues for parties, for there are plenty of specialists to help them. As human capital becomes yet more important to company survival, what will be the qualities that distinguish the great from the OK?

I have two suggestions. The first is the great companies will seek to make the whole job fun - not just the events designed to reward key staff. Now of course not every aspect of a company's activities is going to be enjoyable. We all have to do things we don't like doing. But anyone who has spent much time with different companies will quickly pick up the warning signs: an excess of deference to senior staff, and an evident fear

of criticism are two good indicators that something is not quite right.

The second is to create fluid structures of employment. To persuade clever people to work for you is not just a matter of offering a better package than the opposition. The rival may not be the company next door, but rather the person starting up their own business.

If a person can make more money (and have more fun) working for themselves, why should they work for an employer at all? The answer for some people may be that there is nothing that can be done. The new communications technologies built around the Internet are almost certainly tipping the balance of power away from most large companies (not all - look at Microsoft) and towards very small ones. But many people will be prepared to carry on working for an employer provided they can bring their personal business under the wing of the group they work for.

These are enormous challenges for business leadership, they represent a seismic shift that is taking power away from the corporation

and towards the individual. Few businesses are accustomed to thinking of making their work fun; and fewer still could accommodate employees with an explicit split in their loyalties between their own private work and their job.

But the hardest trick of all, and therefore the one that one that brings the biggest benefits if a firm can pull it off, will be to create a greenhouse where staff can develop new businesses with the support of the parent.

The new industries of tomorrow almost always start with a few individuals and a good idea. They do not start in the established commercial giants. Just as Microsoft was not founded as a sub-division of IBM, the new industries will be created by clever people outside today's commercial giants.

But need that happen? The great prize awaiting every large business in the world is to grow the human capital industries of tomorrow. To win it, they need to create fluid employment structures to retain the cleverest people, then build the greenhouse to develop their ideas.

**DATELINE: MODENA, ITALY**

## The profit in firm family values

By **FRANCES KENNEDY**

**T**he sleek steel-blue LGV (laser-guided vehicle), a sort of R2-D2 without the flashing lights, purrs quietly as it lifts up the pallet of components, pirouettes slowly and moves across the storehouse to deposit them. It is programmed to follow the daily rhythms of the factory. At the end of the working day, it shuffles over to "bed"; a power point in the wall that recharges its batteries overnight.

The scene is not from a futuristic movie nor from a state of the art complex in Japan or Korea. We are in the factory of one of the country's medium-sized family firms that are the backbone of Italy's economy. Rossi Motoriduttori, based near Modena, world leaders in gear reducers and variators. Chances are if you took an escalator or opened an automatic gate recently, their products made it possible.

"Certainly this is the way things are going," said managing director Greco Vero. "Fewer people on the shop floor, using machines when they are suitable and keeping human beings for more skilled work."

Modena's leap from post-war poverty to prosperity has been remarkable. The area has the sixth highest pro capita income in the country and its industry totals more than 2 percent of Italy's annual exports. Expensive new cars and full restaurants are the tip of an iceberg of economic well-being. Modenesi businessmen have a reputation for their adaptability and thinking ahead.

Not surprisingly, with the approach of the scary new millennium with the ghouls of globalisation, Modena's family-run firms are having a strategy rethink.

"We're well established here in Europe but to penetrate in the rest of the world we may have to forge alliances with, for example, an American company," said Vero. An-

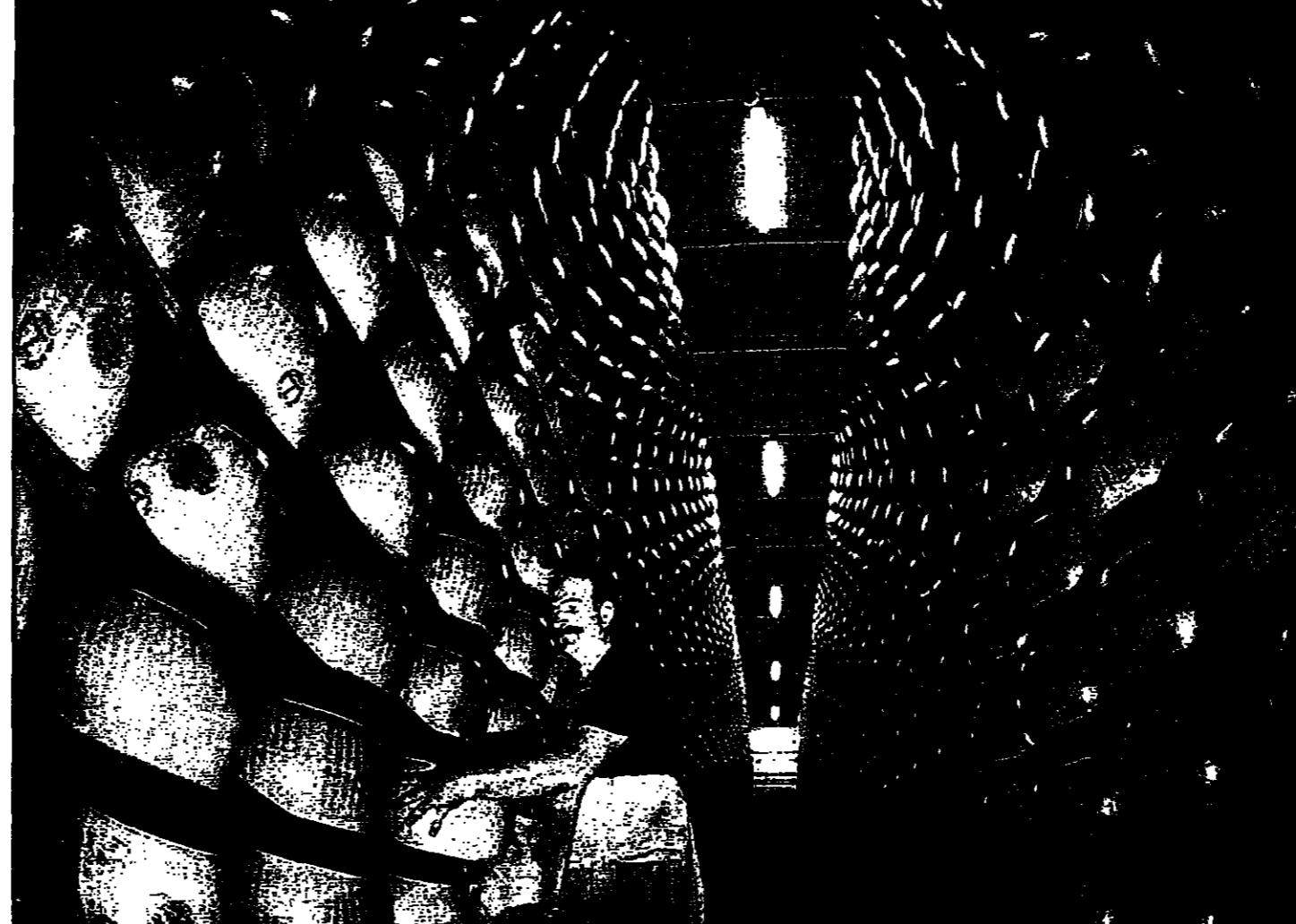
other development which Italian companies have tended to resist, could be a stock market float.

Most people associate the Modena area as the biggest producer of Parmesan cheese, or for its famed tortellini or balsamic vinegar or Ferrari. Yet economists from Harvard to Heidelberg study it for its unique economic model.

"At this area was agricultural plains after the war," said Claudio Lucchese, indicating the panorama of chimneys, factories and roads that makes up Sassuolo, Italy's "Ceramic Valley". "We were poor but the hills nearby were rich in clay so we started with ceramics." Lucchese's father started with a couple of machines trying to mass-produce tiles. Today their company Flormi has covered the corridors leading to the Sistine Chapel and the swimming pools at the Atlanta Olympics. The company is still firmly in the hands of the Lucchese family: the founder's grandchildren are now in key management roles and profits have been poured back into the firm.

As tile makers prospered, suppliers and subcontractors who served their needs sprang up - glaze-makers, manufacturers of cutting machines, creators of firing ovens. "If we need a machine fixed it's just down the road," said Lucchese. "But the reasons the industrial districts work is that while there is healthy competition within the sector we know the value of interdependence. This stands us in good stead against Spain which is making inroads into our market."

Lucchese's ceramic production machines are created by another Modenesi self-made millionaire, Franco Stefanini, whose obsessive pursuit of innovation has earned him the nickname Archimedes. A short, lively man with spiky white hair, he began by creating machines for the ceramics industry and has taken that to the limit. "Look and touch,"



A vast hall of the famed Parmesan cheese lends a strong scent of success to modern Modena

J.P. Amet/Sygma

he says proudly, indicating two apparently identical pieces of green flecked marble. "Which one's the fake?" Only by turning them upside down can you tell.

His company, System, still 100 per cent family-owned, has branched into automation and logistics. "The only way to keep ahead is to con-

stantly think about making processes better," says Stefanini, who has a vertical storage system that provides 200 metres of space in just four square metres. "We generate our own resources. We set up technical schools or faculties at the local university to train specialised staff. If we waited for the government we

would be out of business."

In the food sector there are fewer family firms and more large industrial groups. Now, one of Modena's gastronomic specialties, fresh tortellini, are to be marketed abroad. "We have signed a deal with ASDA and are negotiating with Tesco to produce for them," said

Tavarino, to the north of Modena, seems an unlikely spot for a com-

pany at the cutting edge of Italian street wear, most of which is snapped up by Brits, Japanese and Californians. It was here, among pear and walnut trees, that thirty-something Carlo Rivetti and his sister, whose family own a large textile manufacturer, left the fold to take over two struggling brands, C.P. Company and Stone Island.

Rivetti's company produces fabrics that protect against electromagnetic waves, windbreakers that change colour with the heat, metropolitan jackets with anti-smog masks incorporated and clothes that are tear-resistant.

"Ours is a niche market," said Carlo, a thin sandy-haired man with a quirky smile. "We produce only about a million items a year. We can't and don't want to compete with the big names or the mass producers. We're betting on quality and experimentation. We also count on a personal touch. If an item is not moving in the boutique, the owner can bring it back and change it. If I'm abroad and I see someone wearing a C.P. garment I go up and introduce myself, and offer to buy them a drink."

Bruno Venturelli, head of fresh pasta at the Fini plant, "We have been hesitant to export because a product with a limited shelf life needs excellent transport and distribution, but its going to be fundamental in the future."

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A WEEKLY DIGEST OF THE WORLD'S FINANCIAL PRESS

**Forbes**

**The Economist**

**FINANCIAL TIMES**

**BusinessWeek**

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

**BARRON'S**

**FORTUNE**

**FORBES**  
Bill Clinton's  
plans for  
American pensions

**THE ECONOMIST**  
The restructuring of  
the European  
car industry

**FINANCIAL TIMES**  
Open skies talks between  
Britain and the  
United States

**BUSINESS WEEK**  
When the idea of currency  
union for the Americas  
might work

**WALL ST JOURNAL**  
Japan's new get-tough plan  
to restructure its  
debt-laden banks

**BARRON'S**  
How gold could  
become a valuable  
commodity

**FORTUNE**  
Why Brazil is still  
a worry after the peso  
devaluation

THE PRESIDENT proposes the feds invest social security surpluses in stocks, pumping in hundreds of billions of dollars in the next 15 years.

The Berlin Wall may have fallen, the Soviet Union may have collapsed and China may welcome private foreign money, but the US government now wants to semiautonomize American corporations. Not since the Clintons' attempt to take over health care has there been such a Beltway power grab as this. Washington as venture capitalist?

Political pull will count more than shrewd appraisal of prospects. Our economy will become as nimble and innovative as those of Western Europe. Far better to phase in a new system where younger people would own their social security retirement accounts. This kind of people power is infinitely more democratic than Clinton's Soviet-style approach.

THESE INNOVATIONS will change the nature of the industry. Firms may be able to make production runs of less than 100,000 cars economically, without investing in giant presses at all.

The right way to encourage car makers to embrace such changes is for governments to get out of the way. That means allowing national champions to be taken over and old-fashioned plants to be shut; it also means fostering inward investment and unrestrained competition in retailing. The example to learn from is the steel industry. After years of Brussels-run production quotas, price-fixing and subsidies had done nothing to halt its decline, the entire apparatus of intervention was dismantled in the late Eighties. European steel makers are more competitive today than they have been for three decades. Car makers should follow suit.

SIGNS THAT the US and the UK are ready to agree an open skies accord are to be welcomed, mainly because this could help open the door to a transatlantic open skies agreement between the US and EU. The first step towards transatlantic open skies should be the lifting of restrictions on foreign ownership, currently more onerous in the US.

Governments will have to acknowledge that good fares and service are more important than the flag on the tail. Indeed, there is no role for government in the airline industry beyond ensuring safety and competition.

At a time when the motor, oil and pharmaceutical industries are consolidating, it is absurd that governments remain so determined to promote their national champions in the sky.

NOW THAT the euro has had a successful debut, is it time to start thinking about a dollar bloc in the western hemisphere? A few brave policy-makers are suggesting that North America Free Trade Agreement members - the US, Mexico and Canada - at least consider the idea.

A North American version of the euro is unlikely, and probably unnecessary. The US economy dwarfs its NAFTA neighbours, unlike the European Union which brings together 15 relatively similar, densely populated, industrialised states. And pushing for a new unit to replace the dollar, already a global reserve currency, is apt to be an unwinnable political crusade in the US...

...Few in the Americas seem ready for a single currency. But if the euro gives the Europeans a competitive edge, the NAFTA dollar may be inevitable.

EARLIER THIS month, Japan's vice minister of finance, Eisuke Sakakibara (aka Mr Yen) made the highly publicized remark that Japan's financial crisis would end "in the next week or two". That was yesterday and, despite Mr Sakakibara's optimism, Japan's nearly decade-long financial crisis is far from over.

While the plan developed by the FRA may be a step in the right direction, it does not go nearly far enough to impose market discipline on Japan's bloated banks. Neither does it address the fundamental problem plaguing Japan's financial system: lack of profitability due to immature and inefficient capital markets.

The government needs to "get tough" not only with banks, but also with other distortions in the Japanese economy - many of which the government itself has created.

NOW WE yield to no man in our conviction that gold is a perfect hedge against capital gains.

But wise Marc Faber says that you ought to buy some of the stuff as insurance against a global financial accident.

Marc is eager to confess that he's neither a "gold bug" nor an expert on the gold market. Nonetheless, he "believes the time has come to gradually shift some financial assets into gold".

We suspect that you could do worse than consider Marc's advice. For it is based largely on the contrast between the extraordinary complacency of investors, on the one hand and, on the other, a world economy increasingly susceptible to some grand, unoward event.

And nothing is more comforting, he notes, than insurance that you end up not using.

A KEY reason Brazil is saddled with such a huge deficit is that in 1993 the constitution transferred more than a fifth of federal income tax revenue to the states, while leaving responsibility for social programmes like health care, education and sanitation with the federal government. State governors gorged themselves on this bonanza; the worst came to be known as "mahabras"...

Brazil cannot restore its fortunes without ending such nonsense. But Cardoso has trouble mustering simple majorities; constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority. Cardoso must persuade legislators to put the country's interests before their own - not an easy job even in older democracies. In this sense, Brazil's fate now lies with its political system, which is at least as volatile as its stock market. Get ready for more nasty surprises.

COVER STORY

BY JEREMY WARNER

**A**s the world's largest investor in cyberspace, reportedly owning 25 per cent of the Internet, Masayoshi Son will either go down in history as a blinding visionary or a reckless fool. While all around him whisper about bubbles bursting, the man from Japan is shouting 'buy, buy, buy!' What does he know that we don't?



# Son of the internet

**A**

Ian 'Greenspan', chairman of the US Federal Reserve, thinks investing in them is like buying a lottery ticket, and that most will fail. Bill Gates, of Microsoft, believes that these soar-away stocks should be trading on lower multiples than ordinary companies; he wouldn't advise even his worst enemy to invest at these levels.

Rupert Murdoch thinks the phenomenon will destroy more businesses than it creates. And *The Economist* believes they are about to come "spectacularly crashing to Earth".

Everyone, it seems, is convinced the US craze for Internet companies is a financial bubble about to pop, and that when this happens, the consequences will be quite disastrous, not only for those who have invested in them at these apparently fanciful levels, but also for America's vibrant Silicon Valley and quite possibly for the world economy, as well. Everyone, that is, apart from those crazy Americans, who have taken to trading these stocks, generally on-line, as if this was a Saturday afternoon at the races; everyone, that is, apart from Masayoshi Son, or "Mr Internet" - the man who owns a quarter of cyberspace.

There is no doubt the bubble-like characteristics of the phenomenon. Individual Internet stocks have been known to change hands up to 10 times in a day, so frenzied is the level of trading, while it is not uncommon for the value of shares to yo-yo by 50 per cent in a single trading session.

Some of the hottest Internet companies - Yahoo!, AOL and Amazon.com - have come to be valued, despite their insignificant profits, at more than Boeing and Disney.

So convinced is one leading US economist of the bubble-like characteristics of the Internet craze that he has labelled it "Tulip.com", after the great seventeenth century speculation in tulip bulbs. Rarely have investors seemed so determined to lose sight of reality.

So is the Internet share phenomenon a dangerous game of financial roulette, which is bound to end in tears, or is there more to it than that?

One person who believes there might be is Mr Son, a 41-year-old financier and entrepreneur who, with foresight the rest of us can only dream of, managed to take big shareholdings at an early stage in a whole raft of today's highest flying Internet companies. So inspired was his investment strategy, that he is now not only far and away the biggest investor worldwide in the Internet, but he can realistically claim to own 25 per cent of cyberspace. This may seem a meaningless boast, but shareholdings of around 90 per cent in Yahoo!, the most listed site on the Internet, GeoCities, number three, and E.Trade, one of the US's biggest Internet stock brokers, are just the more visible and valuable in a portfolio that includes nearly 100 "pure" Internet companies. No one else comes close to that concentration of power in what has become the world's fastest growing industry.

"I admit that what's now going on is crazy hype," Mr Son says. But he won't call it a bubble. "Yes, of course there will be a correction, probably later this year or early next. The increase in valuations has obviously been far too fast. But we are long-term investors and this doesn't matter to us."

Mr Son's view of the Internet investment phenomenon is that we are only at the beginning. Today, the quoted Internet sector is worth about \$200bn. "My bet is that over the next 10 years, this sector will go to \$2,000 billion," he says with a degree of confidence that only other self-made billionaires could match. "I say it will rise ten-fold but that is only because I want to stick with a conservative forecast. Actually, I think twenty-fold is more realistic."

To back this forecast, Mr Son cites the example of the personal computer sector: Ten years ago, the collective stock market value of personal computer companies, including giants like Microsoft, Intel and Compaq, was \$36bn. Today they are worth more than \$200 billion. That's a degree of wealth transfer and creation unmatched in recent history. Is it really possible to repeat the trick with this second generation of technology and entrepreneurialism?

Of course it is, says Mr Son. At the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, last month, Mr Son asked a select audience of businessmen, bankers and economists which sector they thought would eventually be bigger: PCs or Internet? "Ninety-five per cent voted Internet," says Mr Son. "And they must be right. The PC market is limited to hardware, software and retail. The Internet is unlimited in size. From flowers to automobiles, the Internet will come to be key in virtually all industries."

"There are only two numbers in my vocabulary - zero and infinity. The Internet encompasses both these characteristics. It has zero variable cost; there is a zero decrease in accuracy as information is passed around. At the same time, it has infinite reach, infinite information and infinite product range. Neither of these things - zero or infinity - were possible in the past."

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"Whoever understands these characteristics and incorporates them into their business model, will succeed in revolutionising their industries, and taking over from the old, established firms."

Prophetic, starry-eyed stuff. Is he right? The record, it might be said, speaks for itself. Mr Son is today one of Japan's leading entrepreneurs and very much the face of "new" Japan - self-made and mistrusted only because he wants to stick with a conservative forecast. Actually, I think twenty-fold is more realistic."

Amazingly for one listed as among 10 to watch out for in the latest assessment published by *Forbes* magazine of the 200 richest people in the world, he still answers his own e-mails - and he does it religiously every day. If Japan has its own version of Bill Gates, Mr Son is it.

His beginnings, however, could hardly have been less auspicious. He was born into a poor family of Korean descent who lived in a shanty town on the edge of Totsu city in southern Japan, where they eked a living from breeding pigs and chickens. Perhaps because of this, Mr Son shunned the traditions of Japanese education and, at the age of 16, went to California to complete his schooling, eventually ending up at Berkeley. There his entrepreneurial skills received an early boost when he invented, and subsequently sold to Sharp for \$1m, an early version of a multi-lingual pocket translator. His other business venture as a student was the import of used video games from Japan. He earned enough money to return to Japan and establish a business, Softbank - a distributor of PC software.

He was pushing at an open door. The PC market in Japan, unlike the US, was still in its infancy. Few others were doing it and Mr Son rapidly moved to a position where he was supplying some 50 per cent of the total retail market in Japan. From there, he moved into PC magazines, developing along the way an almost absurdly simple and ambitious strategy - to control as much of the world's digital future as he could. If nothing else about Mr Son is particularly Japanese, this kind of mission statement is - a straightforward, no-nonsense, statement of ambition and aim.

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BY NAOMI MARKS & JOHN DAVISON

**T**he uncertainty that greeted the accession of Jonathan Harmsworth (right) to the chair of The Daily Mail and General Trust has passed. It's very much business as usual at the media group, with share prices rising and now a place among the elite of the FTSE 100. But with its new-found status comes a nagging old question: can a multi-national company run along family lines remain intact in the global media village?

# set to Britain DMGT

**F**or most companies, joining the elite ranks of the FTSE 100 share index, the Premier League of Britain's blue chip companies, would be a cause for unqualified celebration. But not necessarily so at Daily Mail and General Trust, which achieved the accolade earlier this month.

For Jonathan Harmsworth, the young charmer who stepped into the hot seat last September after the untimely death of his father, Lord Rothermere, achieving the stock market valuation that qualifies him for the FTSE has a double edge.

With it should come a top-drawer City following, cheaper capital and renewed investor interest in the company. But alongside these benefits there are also disciplines. And many of these are about the last thing that this last great British newspaper dynasty wants, or feels that it needs.

It is a curious paradox that the group that owns the *Daily Mail*, that bastion of middle-England certainly, can appear to be a mass of contradictions. Ask senior journalists how they view Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT) and the response will nearly always come laced with admiration, albeit often grudging. Here there is, they will say, a media owner with an uncanny knack of riding the Zeitgeist.

Its papers have editorial budgets that most others can only dream about, and operates under the assumption that it can have whatever or whoever it wants when it wants them. If there is a problem, money is thrown at it in a way that can seem profligate, or like the actions of a spoilt child. But it is a policy which, while at odds with most Fleet Street thinking, seems unerringly to deliver. The facts seem to speak for themselves.

Latest circulation figures show the usual modest but steady rises for both the *Daily Mail* and the *Mail on Sunday*. More significantly they demonstrate total domination of their respective markets. Whatever anyone may think of the products, together they are a great journalistic success story. Equally, few in the City would argue with this picture.

Last week the company posted record results, with operating profits up 34 per cent to £214m.

Yet ask any authority on corporate behaviour and the answer couldn't differ more. DMGT is well out of kilter with the modern age, they say, pointing to the group's archaic dual share structure which allows the founding Harmsworth family to use shareholders' cash without relinquishing any control.

With this comes a degree of shyness, or downright secrecy, about operations which would only normally be associated with a private company. Alone among the big media groups it has no press office, for example. Interested journalists are directed to its corporate affairs office, itself run by a member of the family clan - Vyvyan Harmsworth, a cousin of the chairman.

Most observers would agree, however, that in part this very closed family nature has been behind both the group's recent success, and previous vulnerability.

The dynasty has its origins in the launch of the *Daily Mail* in 1896 by

equally unexpected death of Rothermere himself. So the dynasty fell prematurely into the hands of his son, the then 30-year-old Jonathan.

Both deaths were followed by sharp drops in the DMGT share price. The last was fuelled by fears that the new Lord Rothermere, only three years into his schooling in the ways of the company, was far from ready for the top job.

However, under the steady hands of long-time chief executive, Charles Sinclair, the share price has, since last October, climbed back higher and higher. The message to the City is clear: it is business as usual.

Entry into the company top league, however, brings with it unwelcome City scrutiny, where DMGT's corporate structure finds few friends. There are 100 million DMGT shares issued, and the Harmsworth family owns 80 per cent of the five million that come with voting rights. The present Lord Rothermere alone controls more than 56 per cent of the Group's voting shares. The only other FTSE 100 company to retain such a dual share structure is the merchant bank Schroders. Interestingly, Charles Sinclair is also a non-executive director of Schroders.

**S**uch structures "go against the principles of corporate governance and well established practice in all the developed world," says Chris Baldry, manager of the voting issues service for the National Association of Pension Funds. PIRC, the corporate governance consultancy, recently produced a report highly critical of DMGT. It states that though its directors believe the company fully complies with the Cadbury Committee's code of best practice, PIRC has a number of reservations.

On the dual share structure, Stuart Bell, PIRC research director, is uncompromising. "It's unsustainable that they should retain the position," he says. Yet retain it they will.

"I see no reason for change," says DMGT finance director Peter Williams. "A small number of institutional investors who will not buy our non-voting shares, but that's their prerogative. It's a parent company." He adds: "Media seems to be a business where you can take a long-term view and we can do that. We're not driven by the next set of results. If we need to invest in a product we will do that, even if it means hitting the earnings."

Friends of the new chairman say that fears about his preparedness for the task were themselves premature. They describe him as very well tutored in the group - right from having managed a paper mill in Canada - and keen to make his personal mark. Indeed they say he is more willing than his father to be seen as the power behind the decisions, where the previous Lord Rothermere preferred to smile benignly in the background.

With Claudia, his bright Oxford graduate wife, behind him and with a son of his own, the dynasty seems secure for the next generation. That is what you call long-term planning. Whether money will be spent on the newspapers with quite the same abandon could be interesting to watch. One friend described Jonathan as "slightly frugal" by

nature. One story told is of how he turned up to a golf tournament without any balls to play with, on the assumption that someone else would be providing them.

Pressure to change, analysts agree, is unlikely to come unless the Group hits hard times - and for a long time things have gone rather well. It took 20 years for the *Mail* to overtake the *Express* after the 1971 re-launch, but its position now appears unassailable. Even journalists who disagree with its political position, and its owner's intolerance of in-house union activity, commend the paper for its business professionalism and the golden touch of its editors.

The third Lord Rothermere also launched the *Mail on Sunday*, now almost as impregnable as the daily. And the group succeeded in retaining its supremacy in London with the *Evening Standard* in the mid-Eighties by briefly resurrecting the long-dead *Evening News* in a devastatingly effective spoiling operation against Robert Maxwell's fledgling *London Daily News*.

Perhaps its greatest achievement, though, was in consolidating Jonathan as "slightly frugal" by

the Group, folding its national newspaper wing, Associated Newspapers, into DMGT, which had been, in essence, the personal investment portfolio of the Rothermeres.

Ridding DMGT of all its non-media stocks, the Group was transformed in the late Eighties into the coherent media company it is today.

**A**s well as its national papers, DMGT today includes Northcliffe Newspapers, the UK's second biggest regional newspaper publisher; exhibitions, radio, Teletext, and electronic data businesses; a New Media division producing mass-market Internet sites and a majority shareholding in Euromoney Publications. The whole ship is run smoothly and without fanfare from its Kensington HQ.

Even if the new Lord Rothermere is still something of an unknown quantity, there is much City faith in Mr Sinclair and Mr Williams. One fund manager speaks of the need for pragmatism when dealing with DMGT, preferring instead to extol the "extraordinary success" of its recent past. You cannot fault the company's profits record, he says.

Laura Larghi, an analyst with Paribas, agrees that there can be few complaints about DMGT's performance now, but says the future is a different question.

"Euromoney is the best part of the company. It really is a jewel. But it's just one part of the company. DMGT should be a bit more aggressive. They have the money and can fund other sources of profitability. The newspapers can grow organically but not much more."

Another analyst backs her and says acquisitions will be the key to the group retaining its top ranking.

One senior insider describes DMGT as "traditionally not entrepreneurial, just very, very staid", but says there are signs that the new chairman may want to change that.

He believes the group depends too much on one product (newspapers), and one market (the UK), and says DMGT must look to other countries and activities.

Electronic media, radio and exhibitions are among the areas the new Lord Rothermere is looking to for long-term growth.

Recent acquisitions include Why Publications and Radio Mercury.

Peter Williams concedes that recent successes can be put down to the buoyant UK economy and the strength of advertising, and admits that the pace cannot continue. Hence the importance of diversification. But he stresses that newspapers will remain the heart of the company.

Next month's £25m launch of *Metro*, a daily London free newspaper to be distributed at tube stations, seems to confirm that picture.

It will also be seen as the first real contribution of Jonathan to the group's fortunes - not least because he was one of the small group of five senior managers who decided to go with the project. With a sudden change in editors of the title last week, and *News International* working on a similar title, this is unlikely to prove easy terrain.

Still, there has only been one notable failure in recent years - that of the cable venture *Channel One* which folded late last year after failing to achieve sufficient subscriptions. Pressure from the City for DMGT to change its quiet, old-fashioned ways may still, therefore, be some time in coming.

## HEADLINES



**Founded:** Roots go back to the 1896 launch of the *Daily Mail* by Alfred Harmsworth, later Lord Northcliffe (above). Incorporated 1922.

**Divisions:** Associated Newspapers, DMG New Media, Northcliffe Newspapers, Euromoney Publications, Harmsworth Media, DMG Information

**Employees:** 14,000

**Market capitalisation:** £1.6bn

**Turnover:** £1.4bn (up 18% on 1997)

**Operating profit:** £213.6m (up 34% on 1997)

**Earnings per share:** 135.1p



## THE HEADLINE MAKERS



**Paul Dacre**, executive director DMGT (above). Dacre joined the *Daily Mail* in 1980 and progressed steadily through the ranks, becoming *Evening Standard* editor in 1991. A year later he was made *Daily Mail* editor after *The Times* tried to

pose him. Promoted to editor-in-chief of Associated Newspapers and elevated to the board in 1998, following the death of Sir David English. He is renowned as a demanding workaholic and is a devoted family man. More reserved than Sir David was, he nonetheless commands huge respect across Fleet Street for both his newspaper and strategic vision skills. Aged 50.

**Charles Sinclair**, chief executive DMGT. An accountant, Sinclair joined the group in 1975, the board in 1988 and was appointed chief executive in 1989. Described as relaxed and urbane and "not into power but into success". His is seen as an important guiding and steady hand as the new Lord Rothermere finds his feet though another accountant, finance director Peter Williams, is the face DMGT presents to the City. Aged 50.

THE PLAYER: CHRIS GREEN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF VIRGIN RAIL

# Right man to tackle 'mission impossible'

THE LOGO on the side of the computer-generated image of the new tilting train destined for Virgin's West Coast main line says it all: "Mission Impossible". Chris Green, the high-flier who turned around three divisions of British Rail, has been hired to sort out problems at the country's most unpopular train company.

Mr Green, 55, faces an uphill task. Virgin owns two of the most elderly and problematic rail franchises. The West Coast line from London to Glasgow has had little work done on it since it was electrified in the Sixties. CrossCountry runs trains that connect all corners of the UK and cover distances of up to 800 miles, making them liable to delays.

Last year the franchises attracted more passenger complaints than any other operator and the latest performance figures showed the flagship London-to-Glasgow service had the worst punctuality record in the country, with almost 20 per cent of trains running late. The letters columns of the national papers are full of horror stories from

passengers. Virgin is a butt of the nation's jokes to an extent that only British Rail could rival.

The business probably reached its nadir at the Labour Party's annual conference when Virgin failed to deliver party delegates to Blackpool. Richard Branson went on the radio to tell shocked listeners: "We fucked up, we fucked up badly."

The appointment of Mr Green is a sign that Mr Branson is desperate to restore the reputation of the train business, whose performance threatens to undermine the Virgin brand. Mr Green has been hired on a five-year contract with a two-fold mission - to deliver a markedly improved service on the existing network and ensure the £1.8bn worth of new trains will be delivered on time.

He should be qualified for both, as one insider praised his "exceptional" marketing ability and his track record on train procurement.

The first task looks the most challenging. Mr Green said he would launch a "back-to-basics" strategy to improve punctuality. He has em-

barked on a 100-day mission to get views from staff and passengers about the way forward. "I want added professionalism in everything we do. Whatever we do, let's do it well and let's get rid of those silly little mistakes that have annoyed customers. Running out of tea is just unforgivable," he said. "People have taken their eye off the ball while making large train orders or contracting out work to third parties. We have to get back to basics."

"It will be a process of continuous improvement for the next few months. It is about getting the boring details right. I would hope to be able to show an improvement every three months."

Virgin recently provoked an outcry by increasing first-class fares to Manchester by 10 per cent and to Birmingham by 19 per cent while offering better deals on tickets booked three days in advance.

Mr Green said Virgin's prices had been lower than other operators, but added: "I would not expect us to have higher prices." He had "four or

BY PHILIP THORNTON



five" new initiatives up his sleeve but said it was too early to go into details as he only officially took over the reins from Brian Barrett, who is retiring, on Monday.

Despite Virgin's poor reputation, he said that only 30 per cent of delays were caused by Virgin, with the rest down to other operators, Railtrack or acts of God. Under the deal for the new trains, the train builder Alstom would take responsibility for the existing fleet under a contract that demanded a 33 per cent cut in delays due to train faults. He insisted he wanted to build a new relationship with Railtrack, which is spending £1.2bn on the West Coast line, following recent arguments over who was to blame for failing standards. "Throwing rocks at each other may feel good but it won't solve a single problem."

The two new fleets of trains are the key to the long-term success of the Virgin rail business, which is now 49 per cent owned by Stagecoach. About £1.2bn is being spent on a fleet of 53 140mph tilting trains for the

West Coast line which will achieve the "holy grail" of Glasgow in under four hours, said a spokesman. The rest is being spent on 78 diesel trains for the CrossCountry route.

He has an impressive track record. He is probably responsible for the procurement of more new trains during this period than any time since. His no-nonsense attitude and exceptional marketing ability is widely believed to be a long-needed counter to some of the more disastrous promotions dreamed up by Virgin's novice marketing people."

Mr Green has been here before. From 1992 to 1994 he was managing director of InterCity, the profitable high-speed train business of BR that includes both CrossCountry and West Coast. Ironically, the man in charge of the West Coast line at the time was Ivor Warburton, who resigned last week as director of business development. Mr Green said the pair remained friends.

His successes in turning around the fortunes of ScotRail and the creation of the Network SouthEast business led to him being hailed as the best chairman BR never had. He quit in protest at the plans to break up the network at privatisation. His departure in 1995 for the top job at English Heritage took the industry by surprise.

Observers say Mr Green's career with BR made him the right man for the top job at Virgin Rail. One said:

"He is probably responsible for the procurement of more new trains during this period than any time since. His no-nonsense attitude and exceptional marketing ability is widely believed to be a long-needed counter to some of the more disastrous promotions dreamed up by Virgin's novice marketing people."

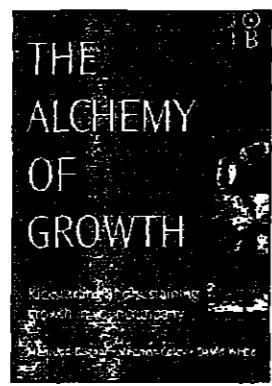
Mr Green declined to reveal his pay package but he said he had been given a "fair deal" by Mr Branson. He said he would have been interested in the job of chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority, the new body being set up by the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, to regulate the railways.

However, it is unlikely he would have been accepted for the post following a Commons Public Accounts Committee report last year that said he was unfit to hold public office. This followed his high-profile departure from English Heritage amid accusations of inaccurate expenses claims. However, there was no suggestion of any fraud.

A WEEKLY SURVEY IN WHICH MARKET LEADERS PICK THEIR MARKET LEADER

## BOOK OF THE WEEK

**The alchemy of growth**  
by Mehrdad Baghai,  
Stephen Coley and  
David White  
Orion Business, £20



THE COMPUTER industry is known for its ability to give those operating in it the thrills and spills of a roller-coaster ride. But even by those standards, the experience of the US company Compaq in the early Nineties looks extreme. A 25 per cent sales rise in 1990 became a 9 per cent fall in 1991 and operating income halved. The company slashed 12 per cent of its workforce and replaced the chief executive and co-founder, Rod Canion.

His replacement, Eckhard Pfeiffer, led a drastic restructure - reducing costs, speeding product development and extending the product line to compete with the "clones" of IBM-compatible personal computers that had transformed its marketplace. According to Mehrdad Baghai, Stephen Coley and David White, the three McKinsey & Co management consultants who are the authors of *The Alchemy of Growth*, Mr Pfeiffer was "earning the right and building his team's resolve to grow".

Citing his introduction of a "performance culture" making managers strictly accountable and highly rewarding high performers, they credit him with an impressive turnaround by the end of 1992 - so creating the conditions for a growth curve that saw sales rise 45 per cent and net income grow at 58 per cent a year between 1992 and 1996. The graphic story is seen as an illustration of how companies lose the ability to grow. "The right and the resolve to grow are preconditions for success in the pursuit of growth," say Baghai, Coley and White.

But it is not that simple. The authors cite Reynolds & Reynolds, a company facing increasing competition at the low-margin end just as it focused on more valuable products and systems. A new chief executive concentrated on a handful of customer markets and built "leadership positions" in them to stabilise operating income. Managers talk of this need to concentrate on several things at once as "keeping balls in the air".

But since the authors are management consultants, they have developed a concept, "the three horizons of growth". This is a "three-stage pipeline" seen as useful in allowing distinctions between the "embryonic, emerging and mature phases of a business's life cycle".

The problem is that, though the three horizons pay off over different time frames, when they pay off has little to do with when they require management attention. Accordingly, the authors say, managers must deal with them all concurrently.

This is a typical consultants' attempt to mystify what is fundamentally obvious. Any manager who had the time to think would believe he or she had to pay attention to coming up with ideas at the same time as ensuring that existing business chugged along as well as possible.

But in throwing light on the mechanics of growth, the book is likely to prove highly valuable. Indeed, most people are so convinced that growth is "a good thing" that they have forgotten that not all growth is profitable.

The McKinsey team point to how Nokia in the Eighties diversified into a whole range of industries only to come unstuck. Significantly, the company's spectacular growth in recent years has come through concentrating on a particular market and coming up with innovative ways of serving it.

ROGER TRAPP

## TOP TEN BUSINESS BOOKS

1	<i>The Little Book of Calm at Work</i> Paul Wilson (Penguin)	£2.50
2	<i>Lost My Virginity</i> Richard Branson (Virgin)	£20
3	<i>The Crisis of Global Capitalism</i> George Soros (Little, Brown)	£17.99
4	<i>Business Studies For You</i> David Needham & Robert Dransfield (Stanley Thomas)	£13.50
5	<i>The One-Minute Manager</i> Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson (HarperCollins)	£5.99
6	<i>Seven Habits of Highly Effective People</i> Stephen R Covey (Simon & Schuster)	£10.99
7	<i>The Hungry Spirit</i> Charles Handy (Arrow)	£7.99
8	<i>The Equal Opportunities Guide</i> Phil Clements & Tony Spinks (Kogan Page)	£13.99
9	<i>Management Theory and Practice, 5th edn</i> G A Cole (Letts)	£12.95
10	<i>The Dilbert Principle</i> Scott Adams (Boxtree)	£6.99

Compiled by Bookwatch Ltd

# Who's doing the business in... advertising?

**Chris Powell**  
Chairman, BNP DDB  
The person I am most impressed with in the advertising industry is Jeremy Bulmore who is non-executive partner at WPP. He came to the top via the creative ladder which is the very best route in my opinion because if you can write and do your own ads you are practically on your way to being a one-man agency. But anyway, my reason for choosing Jeremy is simple. For me he is more insightful than anyone else in the industry.

**Steve Spring**  
Managing Partner, Young and Rubicam

Maurice Saatchi because he has effected the most spectacular growth of an agency in memory. He was the driving force behind the "revenge" creation of the M&C Saatchi agency. Only someone with his focus could have done this; he sat back and thought "I want to number among the top 10 agencies in the UK; I want admiration." He fixed his sights on growth at whatever cost and he achieved it. He's up front and he's in your face. You just can't fail to admire him and the fact that in four years M&C Saatchi has gone from scratch to a place in our top ten agencies is a testament to his abilities.

**Brett Gosper**  
Chief Executive, Euro RSCG Week Gosper

The two people who stand out in the advertising business at the moment are Mark Wein, who is our executive director, and Robin Wight who is the chairman of WCRS. I have picked these two in particular because they share a quality which is fantastically useful in the business these days - they are what I would term "hybrid" advertising people. There tends to be a sharp distinction between those who work on the creative side and those who work on the business side. For me, these two men have managed to combine both creative strategy and business acumen. It really is a fantastically rare combination. With their business sense, flair and strategic tendencies, they could be one man advertising agencies.

**Mark Lund**  
Managing Director, Delaney Fletcher Bozell

There have been three seminal figures in advertising. I should probably start by naming Bill Bernbach who was in advertising in the Fifties and Sixties in America. These were the days when advertising was polite. Bill brought the voice of Jewish New York into the headlines. He introduced a manner of appealing to the consumer which was short, punchy and catchy. Rather than having the voice of an estate agent, advertising was given the language of the sandwich bar. He created a whole new mood and introduced a refreshing immediacy to advertising.

Second I would pick Frank Lowe. He was a groundbreaker in advertising because he

founded the belief in the UK that creative work was worth fighting for. Rather than following to the letter the client's demands, Frank thought it was vital to respect the integrity of the artefact. Although he was ultimately doing the client's work he thought it was important to realise that the client doesn't always know best. For example the client could decide that they wanted the smallest thing changed but Frank realised it would affect the entire balance of a campaign if even the smallest detail was changed. He was the first apostle of the advertiser as expert.

Finally there's David Abbott of Abbott Mead and Vickars. Twenty years ago, David Abbott brought a middle-class sensibility to advertising. David believed that quality was worth looking at with a certain degree of intelligence and respect. For example, the supermarket campaign always used to be based on the pile it high, sell it cheap mentality. But David said no, let's do it another way and focused on aspects such as the variety and quality of food available. His wasn't an entirely polysyllabic form of advertising but it was more so than previously. It's implicit in his ads for Sainsbury's, BT and Volvo among other things. But to reiterate, the important aspect of David's attitude to advertising was that he insisted on a respect for the people to whom he was talking.

**Michael Greenlees**  
Chairman, TBWA

I'd like to single out two people in particular. First is Michael Baulk who is chief executive with AMV. I admire him particularly for the manner in which he was able to step into a situation where he was successor to the hugely successful legacy of David Abbott and to achieve it with enormous success. It's never easy to be a successor and he managed it. His business acumen is also a reason to single him out. He has balanced the seemingly conflicting ingredients in advertising - management and creativity and he has married these two criteria to great effect. I also have to mention Martin Boase of BMP. He has achieved 30 years of excellence with seemingly effortless ease. He has built a culture which has stood the test of time and he's done this thanks to his clear vision and lightness of touch. He managed to create a working environment in which there is a single-minded clarity regarding the agencies' intentions. It is thanks to him that BMP is one of the most successful agencies, and Agency of the Year.

**Amanda Walsh**  
Managing Director, Walsh, Trott, Chick, Smith

John Webster would be my choice. At the moment he's at BNP where he used to be Creative Director. He has created some of the greatest advertising campaigns I have ever seen. He's BNP's secret weapon - innovative, original

and brilliant. Creatives are absolutely vital to advertising agencies because you live or die by your creativity - it's what the clients can't do themselves. An advertising agency simply can't be successful without successful campaigns and your campaigns are designed by your creatives, at the heart of the agency.

**David Kershaw**  
Partner, M&C Saatchi

Maurice Saatchi is a seminal figure in advertising. He utterly changed the landscape of the advertising business. Actually I'd say both Maurice and Charles. They were the first to create a really big agency which was creatively outstanding. Before the Saatchis arrived on the landscape we had either British boutique agencies or huge and boring multinational companies. The Saatchis enabled the advertising agency to take the best of both worlds: they combined the independence and flexibility

of the small company with the size of the multinational. Their move allowed lots of very good big agencies to flourish. The Saatchis really did break the mould; thanks to their entrepreneurialism they were able to smash the orthodox pattern of the old-style agency which was too constraining for this business. They see nothing wrong in being aggressively creative and complement each other perfectly.

**Andy Law**  
Chairman, St Lukes

I'm not sure if my choice of adman is really legitimate, as I don't think he's still alive. But the most interesting person I've seen in advertising has been Bill Bernbach who was working in the Fifties in America. I chose him because he turned his back on the conventions of the advertising industry. He took the decision to put the art directors and the copywriters together to create the first ever creative team, a

system that was still operational. It offered us a whole new organisational model which was truly inspiring. It would be more difficult for me to name someone who is around these days, as advertising has become far too conventional. Everyone lives in their cosy advertising world; there are fewer and fewer independent agencies around as they are all being bought by the global conglomerates in the pursuit of shareholder value. And there are no more creative risk takers. However, if you were to force my hand, I'd have to say Martin Sorrell who is the chairman of WPP. He has a steady hand on a large corporate tiller.

**Steve Morgan**  
Chairman, WPP

I'm not sure if my choice of adman is really legitimate, as I don't think he's still alive. But the most interesting person I've seen in advertising has been Bill Bernbach who was working in the Fifties in America. I chose him because he turned his back on the conventions of the advertising industry. He took the decision to put the art directors and the copywriters together to create the first ever creative team, a

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**Maurice Saatchi**  
Partner, M&C Saatchi

The people I admire most in the industry are my joint chief executives Moray MacLennan and Nick Hurrell. As far as I'm concerned they are the best I know in the advertising industry; they know the most about advertising.

INTERVIEWS BY  
SALLY CHATTERTON



# Equities remain long-term gamble

BY NIC CICUTTI

Personal Finance Editor  
be too badly hit. There is also "market" risk to bear in mind. This is no matter how many otherwise sound companies you invest in, you will be clobbered by a "bear market".

This is where there are more buyers than sellers of equities: the options here are usually either to hang in there and wait for the market to recover, or sell at a loss.

There is a third option too: that of seeing that a fall also offers a buying opportunity. The lower prices are, the higher they will rise when a recovery occurs.

Of course, a canny investor might prefer to wait until the moment when the market has fallen to its lowest point before entering the market. Does this make sense?

In theory, it does. The problem lies in picking the exact moment to invest. Fidelity, the large US fund management group, carried out research on the period between the end of December 1986 and the end of December 1997, an 11-year period.

Fidelity's research over the period shows that the FTSE All Share index delivered annualised returns of 14.8 per cent.

But if you had missed out the 10 best days' growth over those 11 years, the annualised growth would have been 10.7 per cent.

Missing out on the best 40 days over the same 11 years would have delivered returns of just 5.2 per cent.

In other words, investment performance, while positive over the period, rose in a series of spurts.

Missing out on an average of less than four days' growth a year would have cut the average annual performance to almost one third.

A canny investor might agree with this but still hopes to get the in-



For many the fear of a looming stock market crash is enough to hold back from investing in shares. But, as in climbing a mountain, it is important to understand the risks when investing in equities

Steve Peacock

vestment period right. Again, Fidelity's researchers looked at the performance of the MSCI index (another way of measuring share prices) between the end of 1969 and 31 December 1997.

The study was based on three hypothetical investments made on the same day each year – at the highest point in the market (suggesting a poor investment strategy), at the low point (a "good" strategy) and at the arbitrary investment date of 1 January each year (how most of us are likely to invest).

At the end of this 27-year investment period, researchers calculated the annualised returns on each investment date.

Here are the returns: high point, 15.12 per cent; low point, 17.12 per cent; 1 January, 16.38 per cent.

While there is a difference in returns, it is not as significant as one might assume – and it is based on getting the investment timing exactly right every year; an unlikely scenario. There is, however, one way of minimising potential losses and enhancing gains.

Making regular investments offers the potential for "pound cost averaging". This means that if you buy into equities as their price is falling, you will receive more of them in turn, gains that individual funds make will become magnified.

Here, despite the fact that share prices rose by 15 per cent in 12 months, the increase in the value of the fund was more than 25 per cent.

The message to take home is that for most of us, average investors, there is rarely a "right" time to invest. What we can hope for, howev-

er is that over a long period of time any sharp downward corrections can even themselves out.

And if prices are falling, then it makes very good sense to buy into a downturn.

*The Independent* has published a Guide to PEPs, which examines in detail the arguments about investing for growth or income. For your free copy of the guide, sponsored by Scottish Widows Fund Management, call 0345 678910.

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1993 would have grown to

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**8.14%\***  
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8 to 8 Monday-Friday, 10 to 4 Weekends



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## BEST SAVINGS RATES

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TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Tesco	0845 7104010	Tesco Savings	Instant	£1	4.50%	4.50%	Y/y
Woolworth	0800 222200	Card Saver	Instant	£50	5.25%	5.25%	Y/y
Teachers BS	01202 043550	British	Instant	£500	4.85%	4.91%	1/mth
Halifax	01422 533333	Instant Saver	Instant	£500	5.25%	5.25%	Y/y

POSTAL/TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS - NO NOTICE							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Egg	0845 6000292	Savings	Post/Phone	£1	6.50%	6.50%	Y/y
Standard Life Bank	0345 5556567	Direct Access	Telephone	£1	5.85%	5.85%	Y/y
Satway	0800 995995	Direct Savings	Post/Phone	£1,000	6.20%	6.20%	Y/y
Legal & General Bank	0500 111200	Direct Access	Post/Phone	£2,500	6.15%	6.15%	Y/y

NOTICE ACCOUNTS AND BONDS							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Cheltenham BS	0800 272505	Post/Std 30	30 Day (P)	£5,000	6.25%	6.25%	Y/y
Scarborough BS	01723 500516	40 Day Access	40 Day	£1,000	5.85%	5.85%	Y/y
Standard Life Bank	0345 5556567	50 Day Notice	50 Day (T)	£1	5.95%	5.95%	Y/y
Legal & General Bank	0500 111200	90 Direct	90 Day (B)	£10,000	6.65%	6.65%	Y/y

CHEQUE ACCOUNTS							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Sure Bank	01438 744505	WACA	None	£1,000	4.75%	4.75%	Y/y
AMC Bank	0161 4472040	WACA	Instant	£5,000	5.75%	5.75%	Dly
Leeds & Hulme BS	0800 0726738	Albion Cheque	Instant	£1,000	5.75%	5.75%	Y/y
Chelsea BS	0800 4293429	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	4.25%	4.25%	Y/y

FIXED RATE BONDS							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Granville Bank	0171 8678150	Fixed Rate Bond	6 Month	£5,000	5.75%	5.83%	DM
Granville Bank	0171 8678150	Fixed Rate Bond	1 Year	£5,000	5.80%	5.80%	DM
First Active	0345 5018572	Grand Windsor	2 Year	£1,000	6.00%	6.00%	Y/y
Hinckley & Rugby BS	0800 774499	Fixed Rate Bond	5 Year	£5,000	5.75%	5.75%	Y/y

FIRST TESSAS							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Skipper BS	0345 171777	5 Year	£3,000	7.40%	7.40%	Y/y	
Legal & General Bank	0500 111200	5 Year	£3,000	7.10%	7.10%	Y/y	
SAGA for over 50's	0800 300555	5 Year	£3,000	7.10%	7.10%	Y/y	
Leamouth BS	0800 225221	5 Year	£3,000	6.95%	6.95%	Y/y	

FOLLOW ON TESSAS							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
SAGA for over 50's	0800 300555	5 Year	£3,000	7.10%	7.10%	Y/y	
Legal & General Bank	0500 111200	5 Year	£3,000	7.10%	7.10%	Y/y	
Investec Bank (UK)	0171 2031650	5 Year	£3,000	6.90%	6.90%	Y/y	
Barclays Bank	0800 400100	5 Year	£3,000	7.00%	7.00%	Y/y	

OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (GROSS)							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
Portman Channel Islands	01481 822747	Instant 6	None	£5,000	6.30%	6.30%	Y/y
Portman Channel Islands	01481 822747	Instant 5	None	£25,000	6.50%	6.50%	Y/y
Northern Rock (Guernsey) Ltd	01481 714600	Offshore 60 Day	60 Day	£25,000	6.60%	6.60%	Y/y
Affinity & Leicester BS	01624 663566	Notice 180	180 Day	£10,000	7.10%	7.10%	Y/y

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (ASSURED)							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
GE Financial Assurance	0181 3803388	1 Year	£20,000	4.15%	4.15%	Y/y	
Countrywide Assured	0800 838020	2 Year	£10,000	3.95%	3.95%	Y/y	
Countrywide Assured	0800 838020	3 Year	£10,000	3.90%	3.90%	Y/y	
Pinnacle Assurance	0161 2079007	4 Year	£10,000	4.00%	4.00%	Y/y	
Countrywide Assured	0800 838020	5 Year	£10,000	4.05%	4.05%	Y/y	

NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (GROSS)							
TELEPHONE	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	% GROSS	% AER	INTEREST	PAID
INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS		1 Month	£20	3.95%	3.95%	Y/y	
			£500	4.10%	4.10%	Y/y	
			£2,500	4.20%	4.20%	Y/y	
			£5,000	4.30%	4.30%	Y/y	
			£10,000	4.50%	4.50%	Y/y	
			£25,000	4.75%	4.75%	Y/y	
			£50,000	5.			

## International Tax Manager

Central London

£ Negotiable

Our client is a large multinational insurance broker represented worldwide in over 65 countries. The group services clients in the management, financing and transfer of risk by providing specialist broking and consulting services. Clients include corporations, public entities, institutions, professional partnerships and individuals throughout the world. The company is currently seeking an International Tax Manager to provide tax advice on a day-to-day basis to business units and external advisors.

The responsibilities of the role will include:

- ◆ Control of tax compliance on non UK companies.
- ◆ Management of the collation of overseas accounts and tax returns.
- ◆ Involvement with disposals and re-organisations.
- ◆ Advising on the transfer pricing issues.
- ◆ Involvement in the administration of a Dutch mixer company.

Our client requires a Qualified Accountant, ACA, ACCA, CPA, ATII or equivalent. With at least two years corporate tax experience, you will need a proven track record in dealing with a large group of companies. Significant exposure to international tax is essential.

Interested candidates should send their CV to Elinor Campbell at Michael Page Finance, Page House, 39-41 Parker Street, London WC2B 5LN, fax 0171 831 6662 or e-mail: elinorcampbell@michaelpage.com

Michael Page

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### CREDIT ANALYST

Required by International Investment Bank to work within the Collateral Management Unit of our Operations Department. Responsibilities will include analysis and preparation of commercial credit submissions, reviews of collateral security and facilities, industry and country risk analysis, cash flow modelling and testing credit risk strategies. The successful candidate will possess a business degree, coupled with a minimum of two years relevant experience ideally gained within an international financial institution. Salary commensurate with experience. CVs to P. O. Box 21015B, Islington, London N1 2XQ.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION seeks an experienced corporate financier. The successful candidate will be responsible for origination, negotiating, completion and management of a wide range of investment projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. A Masters Degree is essential together with accounting and business qualifications, coupled with in-depth experience of business and private sector development in transitional sub-Saharan economies outside Africa. High level contacts within national and international companies, governments and parastatal enterprises would be advantageous. Salary negotiable. CVs to Box Number 21015, Islington, London N1 2XQ.

### Trainee Chartered Accountants

Chartered Accountancy firm based in London seeks a trainee to join its growing team of some 150 accountants in the accountancy field. This is a trainee position with an immediate start. Please apply in writing to: Kay Peters, Chartered Accountants, New Loom House, 101 Bedchurh Lane, London E1 1UJ or fax your CV to: 0171 480 7182 (No Agencies).

## Accountant

Central London

c £30,000

Our client is a UK based advertising services agency that is part of International Media Conglomerate.

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They are seeking an Accountant to join this fast paced and dynamic environment.

Main responsibilities include:

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- ◆ Preparation of statutory accounts.
- ◆ Extensive liaison and involvement with annual auditing process.
- ◆ Continual relationship building and reporting to clients with specific information on a quarterly basis.
- ◆ Supervision of internal accounting processes and supervision of a junior accountant.
- ◆ Involvement in the finalising of contracts with major clients.

Individuals must be qualified Accountants, preferably with experience of small business accounts, audit procedures and a 'can do' attitude. An ability to liaise at all levels and extensive experience dealing with clients on a day-to-day basis is essential.

Interested candidates should forward their CV, with details of current salary package to Natasha Puttins at Michael Page Finance, Page House, 39-41 Parker Street, London WC2B 5LN or e-mail: natashaputins@michaelpage.com

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Please write or ring for further information.

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- in-depth knowledge of central banks, investors and mining houses;
- practical experience of structuring transactions involving exotic precious metals options as well as managing the associated risks;
- knowledge of the use and application of financial function add-ons.

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Applications, including full curriculum vitae and current remuneration details, should be sent to Lesley Ashton-Cole, Director - Human Resources, Rabobank International London Branch, Thames Court, One Queenhithe, London EC4V 3EL by not later than 12th March 1999.

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Further information about NESTA, full job descriptions and details of how to apply should be accessed from our website: <http://www.nesta.org.uk> or write to Ms. S. Hainsworth, NESTA, Gainsborough House, 33 Throgmorton St., London EC2N 2BR for a recruitment pack. Applications to job share are welcome. Closing date for receipt of applications: 1st March 1999. Quoting ref: IND/1.

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#### Financial Analyst

responsibilities will include analysing and carrying out statistical and quantitative research with specific reference to business markets in the USA; generating investment recommendations and report preparation. The successful candidate will have an MRA and possess extensive business experience within North America. The salary offered is commensurate with experience. If you possess the skills and experience required for this role, please send your CV to PO Box 21015A, Islington, London N1 2XQ.

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## In Manhattan, nail maintenance is a chore

MY CABBIE for the journey from JFK airport to Manhattan had obviously been hand-picked at immigration. Some sharp-eyed official had spotted that his grasp of English was minimal: just "I love this country," and "Wherezat?" And he turned out to have no sense of direction. "Go drive a New York taxi" they had told him, and off he had gone.

To be fair, the two-hour traffic jam into the city was probably beyond my driver's control. Unfortunately, locating my hotel was beyond him, too. After driving round Manhattan for another half-an-hour, it was clear he had no idea where my hotel was. Poor thing, I

thought, that grid system can be terribly confusing can't it, what with Third Street being next to Fourth Street and so on.

Then we turned a corner and, there, more by luck than anything else, was the Waldorf. Mind you, after a few days here, I don't blame anyone for not doing a local version of *The Knowledge*. You'd need full body armour before you'd dare venture onto the Manhattan streets on a moped with a clipboard.

Apart from the potholes, the worst hazard is the in-line skaters - crouched, demonic figures all in black with urban-warrior face-masks and serious "attitude". What this means, in effect, is that they will

knock you down as soon as look at you through their wrap-around mirrored glasses, and I've laddered two pairs of expensive tights already from much-too-close encounters.

But actually, it's not just the skaters who have gone short on the manners front. New York's the sort of place that makes everyone so impatient and rude - and it's catching. After just a few days here, I find myself drumming my fingers on the nearest surface and muttering, "C'mon, c'mon," whenever I have to wait more than a nanosecond for anything.

Unfortunately for my nerves, this sort of thing happens fairly



### THE TRADER

New York's the sort of place that makes everyone so impatient and rude - and it's catching

often, since rampant capitalism brings with it rampant consumer choice. Consequently, the person in front of you in the sandwich shop will be ordering "tuna on rye ciabatta, half-fat mayo, rocket, lo-salt, hold the pepper, add pickle on the side, tall skinny latte, half almond-half hazelnut, extra froth, cinnamon mocha top" when they could be having cheese and pickle on brown bread and a Nescafé.

Suddenly I'm not a bit surprised by the story of the old British duchess who is supposed to have fought off muggers with her umbrella. She'd probably just been trying to get a simple cup of tea.

Then there's all the keeping up

of appearances. In London, you get your hair and nails done and think of it as a treat, and what with meeting friends for drinks, you only make it to the gym once a week. Here in New York you have your hair styled daily and regular nail maintenance sessions and think of it as a chore, and what with going to the gym every night, you have no time to make any friends.

Choice, we are told, is freedom, so how come everyone here has the look of people running on quicksand, afraid to stop moving in case they are sucked under? You'd think all this choice would make people happy. You can't help wondering, though, whether anyone would

actually choose to collect their laundry at 3am if they weren't working 14-hour days. It's not so much freedom as self-servitude.

You'd think that all this manic activity would result in manic achievement. Not if our New York office is anything to go by. There, sitting at a spare desk in the corner, I feel as if I'm at the eye of a tornado that's whirling about me.

There must be speed in the water supply or something. I think to myself, until I step away for a screen break. As I disappear round the corner, the air behind me calms and I hear a voice say: "It's OK, she's gone. Who wants to play Grand Theft Auto?"

## Accountants harden up the value of company 'soft' stuff

BY ROGER TRAPP

VALUING BUSINESSES has always been a lot more complex than it appears, even to accountants. Long before the rise of information technology led to Microsoft becoming the world's most valuable company, despite having less in the way of factories and other fixed assets than the likes of General Electric and General Motors, there was a struggle to bridge the gap between the value of those assets and the worth of the business as a whole.

Traditionally, accountants have seen the whole in terms of "soft" stuff, which they find difficult to quantify. Accordingly, when one firm bought another one that owned a collection of household-name brands, the difference between the value of the target company's factories, plant and the like and the purchase price was seen as "goodwill".

However, this caused enough problems when the soft assets were confined largely to brands. For example, it became a little odd that brands gained a value when they were acquired but not when they were home-grown. Now that received opinion has it that the true value of companies such as Microsoft lies not so much in their brands as in the people who create them, the difficulties increase.

The issue is causing much soul-searching among members of the accountancy profession. A discussion paper issued earlier this month by the Institute of Chartered Accountants' financial reporting committee notes that the pressure for financial reporting to bridge the gap between the net assets of a business and the value of a business as a whole has been growing because the gap itself is widening and adds that - under existing financial reporting conventions - the cash spent on intellectual assets and brands has an adverse effect on reported financial performance.

The benefits this expenditure will bring are considered too difficult to foresee, control and measure to allow any assets to be recorded.

Consequently, there is no way of telling from a company's accounts whether £1 spent on training or research expenditure has been a waste of money or money well spent," concludes the document - *Financial Performance: Alternative Views of the Bottom Line*. Absurd as this may seem, it is by no means the only issue worrying the committee.

In fact, Robert Hodgkinson, the Arthur Andersen partner who chairs it, believes that there is a danger that organisations such as the Accounting Standards Board have been concentrating on classification and presentation issues rather than on the main issue of establishing what exactly financial performance is and then exploring the implications



The worth of a firm's heavy machinery and factories is easy to work out. The value of people, ideas and 'goodwill' is harder to gauge

Mike Poloway

for financial reporting. The paper - which is, Mr Hodgkinson stresses, designed to reflect a broad range of opinion from the managers, analysts and academics who joined the accountants on the committee - concludes by saying: "Reporting the numbers is not an end in itself but is the basis for clear communication, effective accountability, efficient capital allocation and improved performance."

The reporting committee noted weaknesses in each and goes on to propose what it calls a "twin-track" approach, on the basis that nearly all users are given an overall view of what management has achieved. The benefits of this approach are:

■ All users - rather than just sophisticated investors - are given an opportunity to judge whether managers are delivering what they said they would.

Look at how this can be conveyed. At one extreme is the "raw materials" approach, where investors are given various pieces of information and left to work out for themselves estimates of "underlying financial performance". At the other is the "ready-made" method where managers simply report their own estimates of how the business is performing.

The reporting committee noted weaknesses in each and goes on to propose what it calls a "twin-track" approach, on the basis that nearly all users are given an overall view of what management has achieved. The benefits of this approach are:

■ All users - rather than just sophisticated investors - are given an opportunity to judge whether managers are delivering what they said they would.

■ Analysts are still at liberty to perform their own calculations of a company's underlying financial performance

■ It enables managers to carry out self-assessment exercises effectively while giving investors through the markets, the final say.

■ Financial performance is likely to be enhanced if management is encouraged to report on the full range of its activities using the bases adopted by investors.

The committee is not breaking new ground in proposing this sort of assessment. The ASB's Financial Reporting Standard 3 has established the notion of setting about this sort of reporting via the profit and loss account and the statement of total recognised gains and losses, which is mainly used to report gains

and losses on fixed asset revaluations and foreign currency differences on retranslating the net assets of overseas subsidiaries.

But with the ASB expected to review the standard shortly, the committee believes the whole area is ripe for re-examination.

Among the principles it regards as necessary for study are the idea that - because the future is uncertain - financial performance cannot be reported as a matter of fact; that financial performance reporting should therefore have the twin aims of enabling investors to make their own assessments of underlying financial performance and encouraging managers to report on their own view of underlying financial performance; and that to meet investors' needs and encourage

age management accountability - accountants need to accept that financial performance can and should be measured in a variety of complementary ways.

If that sounds like an attempt to allow plenty of room for manoeuvre, Mr Hodgkinson is unrepentant. Just as he and his colleagues have concluded that the ASB approach of having two statements has led to one being seen as more important than the other, so he is adamant that making the balance sheet similar to an inventory of various types of assets does not work either.

"That's a blind alley," he says, adding that it is up to businesses to experiment with presenting the bottom line as it is in their interests to improve the standard of their communications with investors.

As recent results have shown, service organisations have seen strong growth in revenues at a time when other businesses have suffered. But service can be added to even hard-core manufacturing operations with a view to maintaining prices and improving revenues.

Mr Gregory pointed out how General Electric of the United States did this by offering training and consultancy when supplying power generators. "This has the double effect of giving a distinct competitive advantage and growing revenues."

Another way Mr Gregory sees companies using a service to protect themselves in a deflationary environment is to concentrate constantly on customer satisfaction. This enables companies to compete on something other than price. Other conditions that enable companies to be "deflation winners" include:

■ Exploiting a critical asset that is in short supply - for example, the shortage of skilled staff in many industries helps explain the success of consultancies, particularly in IT.

■ Developing intellectual property - for example, patent protection in the pharmaceutical industry has contributed to the strong performance of this sector;

■ Differentiating through product performance or design - for example, Gillette and Colgate have both been able to raise prices and gain market share through introducing products offering superior value;

■ Compensating price decline with volume growth - for example, Vodafone is offsetting falling prices with rapid gains in sales;

■ Outpacing falling prices with lower costs.

Mr Gregory said that for companies in the "loser" bracket, only "swift and far-reaching change offer a remedy". They should restructure capacity through a mixture of acquisitions, swaps, disposals and exits, reposition themselves as cost leaders through innovative business systems and shift to niches where prices are supported by unique value.

## Deli-dollar offers route to business funding

BY HELEN JONES

PASTRAMI ON rye might not sound like an alternative to hard cash but in one American town, sandwiches are replacing dollar bills.

Frank Tortorillo runs a deli in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. In 1989 he wanted to move to larger premises but the bank would not lend him the \$4,500 he needed, so he simply printed his own money.

He did not forge dollar bills - he launched "deli dollars" which customers could buy for \$1 and, at phased periods, cash in for \$10 of food. He sold the lot in a month and raised \$5,000. "Frank's customers were backing his loan because they felt they were helping him beat the bank and he was paying them back in sandwiches," says David Boyle, an alternative economist who details many other new forms of currency in his

book, *Funny Money*. Something strange then happened - the deli owners started acting like real money.

"Parents passed them on to their student children to make sure they were eating properly," said Mr Boyle. "Employers passed them to workers as Christmas gifts." The minister ate at the deli and soon notices started turning up in his collection box. Even the bank which refused Frank a loan in the first place circulated deli dollars.

Frank Tortorillo's story has a feel-good folksy air to it, but alternative currencies are now used by major companies through customer loyalty programmes, phone cards and air miles. "Suddenly everybody

is issuing their own money," said Mr Boyle. "Take air miles - this is a currency issued by airlines which you can spend on an array of goods and services and which disappears when you've spent it. It doesn't carry on in circulation; it just gets deleted."

In the US, bartering between businesses and professionals is now worth \$8bn a year, say the futurologists Ira Matathia and Marian Salzman, of the consultancy group Y&R Brand Futures. They add: "At the centre of the industry - which is growing at 15 per cent a year - is the National Association of Trade Exchanges, an association of business owners and professionals who have joined together to trade surplus goods and services."

Ms Matathia and Ms Salzman believe bartering will grow because the

Internet has opened once-unthinkable global trading possibilities. But new money does not have to be about business. Community groups are involved. A Washington law professor, Edgar Cahn, was responsible for the launch of "time dollars", based on volunteer help in the community. Individuals register with their time dollar project what work they will do - from roofing to driving things they need done in return.

"You can spend your time dollars on services from other people in the system," said Mr Boyle. "Or you could give it to an elderly relative who might need it more. Or you can keep it for a rainy day."

Time dollars or Lets (Local Enterprise Trading Systems) are now used in the US, UK, Germany,

Japan, New Zealand and Australia. In the UK, there are 450 Lets networks with 40,000 members. The London borough of Greenwich has a full-time Lets development officer. Lets members offer everything from gardening to massage. Liz Shepherd, of LetsLink UK said: "Lets offers a unique form of self-help and mutual aid, encouraging people to exchange services, time and occasional goods on an equitable basis."

The system is not without problems. The Department of Social Security has indicated credits earned through Lets should be treated as having monetary value for the purposes of calculating state benefits. Lets is lobbying the Government to clarify the situation.

Funny Money: In Search of Alternative Cash is published by HarperCollins at £14.99

## PARTNERS

DICK POWELL AND RICHARD SEYMOUR

The two founders of the industrial design firm Seymour Powell met after completing art college. Their company now employs nearly 30 people and its clients include BMW and Casio. The pair are also broadcasters, having made the Channel 4 series 'Designs on You...'.

**D**ICK POWELL: We didn't actually know each other at the Royal College of Art. I was doing industrial design and Richard was doing graphics. When I went back the following year to look at the degree shows, I saw his. It was more product than graphic. For example, he had a poster to warn people in factories about dust, printed as a sticky film. The more dust, the more the message became visible.

Meanwhile, I had set up in business and was lecturing part-time on a foundation course in St Albans. Richard did the same, and I got to know him as we both rode motorcycles. We used to travel up and down together.

Richard was in advertising. I was a product designer; he was a graphic designer. The skills you need are completely different, and graphic designers who have switched into industrial design are rare, because of the knowledge needed. But Richard obviously had that sort of interest.

Then I left my firm, so I was working on my own. Richard was getting fed up with advertising, saying: "All I am is a glorified Filofax. There's no sense of permanence to anything we do. It's all so ephemeral and transient. Who gives a stuff about this or that ad? If I ever get really fed-up, can I come and rent desk-space from you?"

I had a bit of spare space and I said "sure". One year, I think it was 1980, I came back from holiday and found Richard had moved in.

As you do when you are working with people in one room, you say: "What do you think of this?" He has an unbelievable drawing talent; a kind of on-board CAD system.

Let me give you an example: my parents moved out of their house and I wanted to draw it, but just couldn't remember the details. Richard had been there once, for two hours. He said: "It's okay, I'll draw it." He could just pull it back out, because he has a photographic memory.

We were working together on projects, but because both of us had been burnt in previous businesses, we didn't want to have partners ever again. After three years of gradually growing together, though, we later formalised the arrangement as Seymour Powell Ltd. We were working together in the best way partners can. It was by osmosis; his thinking was penetrating mine, and vice versa. First we set up a holding company, a shell which allowed us both to run our own business without the complexities of getting together. It was only two years later that we incorporated it.

Richard learnt a lot about how to be a product designer from me. For the first few years, what I said tended to be what went. But that gradually disappeared as he very quickly learnt how everything worked.

We sit opposite each other at what used to be called a "partner's desk". We have our own entrances and we are both very messy. We hardly ever see each other socially outside of a design context. But there's an awful lot about Richard I admire. He's a polymath, a very smart guy with a huge intellect. He's brilliant at telling jokes. I was the guy who used to remember them and he was the guy who told them.

We laid down the rules at the beginning for example, if something is bothering you because you think it's wrong, you have to say so and don't hold grudges. We also set ourselves something we wanted to achieve: when the managing director of Sony is thinking of using a design company, one of the first three names he'll think of will be us.

Our relationship is a bit like a marriage - you need a sort of open understanding. There's no room for any kind of Machiavellian intrigue. We don't disagree about much. Eventually we will hammer out a solution. I tend to do more of the running of the business, and I'm more product-focused. Richard is interested in the wider issues and tends to let go of the structure. There have been occasions when I have had to shout: "What's going on here? This can't go on."

**R**ICHARD SEYMOUR: The first time we consciously met was in the supplies cupboard at St Albans. We got chatting and it turned out we took a similar route. It was a transnational imperative that threw us together. We occasionally got together early on Sundays to drive our remote-controlled models in Battersea Park. I put the remote-control system into my motor bike; I hadn't realised it was massively illegal, but it used to amuse us outside pubs occasionally.

Dick has got an extremely good memory. We'd go to a client and he would have in his mind the database of jokes and it would be my job to deliver them. When people say, "a 16-year partnership, wow, that's amazing", I think, "it is, actually". How has it hung together so long?

especially as we are both so competitive? It's not destructive, though - it's in a sort of relay. We always have to come up with one better.

I have learnt professionalism from Dick, who has a very strict streak; a sense of how it should be. That was quite a strong matrix within which to work. He would produce five options, each completely worked through, whereas others would do one. I can't imagine a better business partner than Dick Powell. He is scrupulously honest.

Although I trained as a graphic designer, I went into advertising and then film production design. But I was fed up of working my nuts off to create something that evaporated. More often than not, we were compensating for the inadequacies in the product itself. Dick had taken on a property probably a little bit large for him and said: "Any time you want to leave advertising..." He came back from a

holiday one day to find me. That was the crucible where Seymour Powell formed. Dick came in one morning and said: "Look, I've got this idea. I think we should form a company together. I think we should call it Seymour Powell." I thought, here's how to win a man over; with my name at the beginning. When I am being brutally honest, I describe myself as a hitchhiker. My thumb was out and off we went. Because of Dick's strictness, there were rules involved: we should concentrate on product design, and not entertain other disciplines. But product design is a very broad discipline. It's like a big playground.

Using phrases like "management style" to me is, like, "what the hell does that mean"? Dick is much better at formal management. He manages to keep his desk tidier. He goes to levels of great mathematical precision whereas I am much

more of a wet-finger merchant. But we lead from the front.

The desk is a model for the company. We're like weathermen. The nice thing about having two of us is that a client can cleave to one or the other: I'm not the most conventional looking person in the world. But the wonderful thing for me is that I can just be exactly how I am and it doesn't seem to matter. I am not a Savile Row suit wearer. If I wasn't working with Dick, I would probably be in an entirely different discipline. For some reason, I had a three or four-year attention span. I did a book with Michael Palin, the world's first children's hologram book. It sold 300,000 in hardback and was translated into 11 languages. If the partnership with Dick hadn't been so strong, I would have said "Books! Career! Change again!"

Dick and I work in very different ways. He sets up a dialogue on

paper. You can follow the genealogy and see his brain at work. My dialogue is internal. When Dick and I first worked together we would be sitting at the table, and he would be drawing, drawing, drawing and he would say: "For God's sake, draw something." I would say, "I am". Then the stuff would come out. I think he still finds it a curiosity. My sort of cathartic mechanism is great when it comes to putting down a believable concept, but it's absolutely hopeless for detail.

When we formed Seymour Powell, my knowledge of product design could be written on the back of a fag packet. Eric Cantona didn't say this, but he could have done: "A kite can only fly because it's attached to a string." One tends to think of restraint as a force that reduces effectiveness but in this particular case, restraint allows it to flow.

INTERVIEWS BY  
RACHELLE THACKRAY



Powell (left) and Seymour: 'Our relationship is a bit like a marriage - you need a sort of open understanding' Nicola Kurtz



In the March issue:

Smart ideas for small spaces - a tiny bathroom, a poky kitchen, a box bedroom and a dinky study

The coolest stuff on the high street - 50 hip buys for under £50

Comfort furniture - the squishiest sofas and squishiest chairs

How to decorate like a pro - three gorgeous room revamps

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THE INDEPENDENT

# WEDNESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



The man below is a British citizen. He is standing trial as a war criminal. The jury is now in Belarus, tracing the path he is alleged to have taken to the forest where 2,700 Jews were slaughtered. Leading them there is a man who says he saw the shooting

**I**nto Domachevo's valley of death trudged the British jurors. The eight men and four women, dressed in brightly coloured, warm winter gear, were accompanied by Mr Justice Potts in a red skateboarder's hat. They walked in single file through the snow down a forest path in western Belarus that led towards a cemetery where 2,800 Jews lie buried in mass graves.

The jurors' guide was an elderly Belarusian man named Fedor Zan - still ramrod straight at 75 - who was dressed in a Soviet-era brown plastic coat, a fur hat perched on his head. Mr Zan is a man seeking justice for the alleged crimes of 57 years ago in the summer and autumn of 1942 when the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union and overran this border village, wiping out its Jewish population - with the help of locally recruited policemen.

Mr Zan is a former school friend of Anthony Sawoniuk, the defendant in Britain's first Nazi war crimes trial. He led the jurors, judge and legal officials through the snow-covered forest, with the freezing wind blowing on their faces, to the scene of the alleged crimes.

But this was more than a trudge through Belarus snowdrifts, it was a journey into the past and the horrors of the Holocaust. To witness this journey, a British court has been moved from the Old Bailey to this border town.

Mr Sawoniuk, a retired British Rail ticket collector aged 77 and from south London, is charged with four counts of murder during the Holocaust, although the prosecution alleges that he murdered 20 Jews between 19 September and 31 December 1942. He is the first person to come to trial for war crimes since Parliament passed legislation in 1991 that allowed police to start murder investigations for crimes allegedly committed during the Second World War by people who are now British citizens.

At the opening of the trial last Wednesday, John

Nutting QC, for the prosecution, said that Mr Sawoniuk was one of the first volunteers for the town's German-run police force, the Schutzmannschaft, after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941.

"This defendant executed Jewish men and women whose only crime was to be Jewish," he said. "The evidence indicates that the defendant was not only prepared to do the Nazi bidding but carried out their genocidal policy with enthusiasm."

Mr Sawoniuk has admitted that he was a volunteer policeman in the German auxiliary police force but has denied all charges of murder. Last week, his lawyer, William Clegg, told the court that he may have had no choice but to join the police force.

"There were lots of offers that couldn't be refused in Belarus after the German invasion," he said. "And one possibility is an invitation to join the local police." Mr Clegg pointed to the fact that the Germans executed two people in the Domachevo police force as evidence that membership may not have been voluntary.

Fedor Zan was sworn in as a witness last week at court number 12 in the Old Bailey. Yesterday at court number 12 in the Old Bailey. Yesterday and prosecution and Mr Justice Potts made legal history. This visit to the Holocaust killing fields by the cemetery in Domachevo was the first time a British jury has travelled abroad to the scene of the crime.

Jurors have been given a potted history of the Holocaust and been supplied with maps and photographs of the area where the crimes occurred, in the western border region of the former Soviet republic of Belarus.

The tightly organised visit has been sanctioned at the highest level in the capital Minsk, with which Britain and other EU member states only recently re-established diplomatic relations.

The three-coach party of jurors, court officials and the accompanying press, has been provided with police escorts at every stage of their journey, while



under the Soviets, and are now living as citizens of an independent Belarus.

But much remains here of Soviet rule. Red stars and war memorials to the millions of Soviet soldiers who lost their lives fighting against the Nazis are commonplace. Local shops are meagrely stocked and many of the inhabitants of Domachevo's attractive, peasant-style wooden-framed houses still draw their water from nearby wells.

Remnants of the Soviet era remain, but the Jews are gone, buried in the mass grave at the town cemetery. Most were killed on the Day of Atonement, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, in September 1942. Their deaths are commemorated by a Soviet era memorial, an obelisk topped with a red star that says: "In memory of the victims of the German Fascist terror 1941-45."

As was the Soviet practice, the memorial makes no mention of the fact that those who lie in the mass graves under concrete plinths lived as Jews and died for their religion. This omission was commonly made for fear that sympathy for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust might lead to support for Zionism and the state of Israel. While there are plenty of Orthodox crosses at the cemetery, there is not a single Star of David in sight.

Immediately after the invasion in September 1941, Fedor Zan says he saw Mr Sawoniuk - at the time a member of the German volunteer police force - shoot 15 Jewish girls and women in the forest.

While hiding in the bushes, Mr Zan saw "about 15 Jewish women of mixed ages with yellow badges on their clothing, standing in front of an open grave". John Nutting QC said: "He [Mr Sawoniuk] ordered the women to remove their clothes then shot them with the weapon."

Yesterday in the pine forests beside the Domachevo cemetery in the freezing wind, flurries of snow whipping around him, Fedor Zan stood in the same thicket where he hid 57 years ago. He had hidden there, he told the judge and jury, while his former schoolfriend shot those 15 Jewish girls and

women. The jurors' journey through Domachevo took them back to the horrifying events of the Holocaust as it unfolded on the same doorsteps, and beside the same snow-covered pine trees, past which those girls and women had walked.

Jurors saw the house of number six Sverdlov Street, where Anthony Sawoniuk spent his childhood. A curious child peered from the window at the scrum of onlookers and television cameras, while gold-toothed babushkas gossiped in the snow-lined streets about the legions of unaccustomed visitors and the militia cars escorting them across the town.

From Sverdlov Street the jurors moved on to several key sites of the trial, including the site of the former police station where, during the war, Sawoniuk's first wife was caught in crossfire and killed in a partisan attack. The building now houses the city council.

Jurors were also shown the spot where Fedor Zan saw his aunt and her family being led away from the police station before they were executed. They saw Lenin Street, the road that marks the perimeter of the former ghetto. But it was the walk into the forest, where the Jewish girls and women were shot, that was most harrowing for the jurors.

One by one each juror, as well as the judge and accompanying lawyers, walked into the thicket from where Fedor Zan said he witnessed the shootings in the nearby cemetery.

Domachevo's cemetery was still and quiet after the British legal party departed yesterday afternoon. Like Auschwitz and Birkenau, Belsen and Dachau, it is a haunted place, and it's not hard to imagine that the freezing winter air somehow still carries echoes of the screams of those who died there, naked and terrified. For the ghosts of Domachevo's cemetery still haunt not only Belarus but Britain too, and other countries that fought the Germans but readily took in alleged Nazi war criminals, giving them the sanctuary they had denied to the Jews under Nazi rule.

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## FASHION



## Innocent locked up

Sir: I am dismayed by the Government's proposal to detain indefinitely and without any form of trial those whom it regards as being "a danger to the community". I have worked with people suffering from mental illness for over 25 years, and I find it difficult to accept that anyone is untreatable.

What is more worrying is the tendency of the health services and community to see anyone who acts in an unconventional manner as a risk. Is it really right that a person who has committed no offence should be detained only on the basis of perceived behavioural traits? We should remember how in the Soviet Union dissidents who were perceived as a danger to society were removed to psychiatric units and detained there indefinitely.

Whatever the safeguards the present government may set up, it is not difficult to imagine the future use of the system as a means of detaining and then ignoring those who are seen as in some way "different" or dissident.

MAVIS IREDALE  
Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire

Sir: We are now asked to "confine", possibly for life, people who have committed no crime but might do so. The monstrosity of this proposal can only be mitigated by assurances that these unhappy innocents will nevertheless be guaranteed all those liberties denied to convicted criminals in addition to the loss of liberty.

I mean the liberty to eat what and when they please, to go to bed and get up and to dress as they please. They must have access to entertainment and recreation of their choice, the freedom to entertain visiting friends when they please, and to move freely within the outer limit of their confinement. These are the minimal liberties of innocent people.

In addition we must be sure that they receive the medical attention that they need and not that which serves the interests of the medical profession or the institution in which they are confined.

Finally we must be confident that they and the staff of that institution do not become institutionalised (as happens in ordinary prisons) because that would, of course, negate the possibility of any effective treatment.

I have sketched the minimal requirements of justice. They would cost a lot but I am sure that the Home Secretary's anxiety for the right kind of popularity will spur him to find the money.

DAVID F POCOCK  
Professor of Social Anthropology  
Leeds, East Sussex

Sir: Half of the people contacting our national advice service who have been diagnosed with a personality disorder have, in fact, been misdiagnosed.

Young people and people from ethnic minorities are particularly at risk of being wrongly labelled. The Government's plan for preventative detention of people with a personality disorder risks this problem being made worse.

A severe mental illness such as schizophrenia tends to strike in late adolescence or early adulthood. Left untreated, or treated badly, it can look very like personality disorder to professionals. It is a scandal that people with such a serious but treatable condition are left without help for an average of 18 months. The Government must make sure that there is a thorough assessment by skilled staff so that appropriate treatment is available at the earliest opportunity.

CLIFF PRIOR  
Chief Executive  
National Schizophrenia  
Fellowship  
Kingston upon Thames, Surrey

## Green dogma

Sir: This week, delegates of the Oslo and Paris Commission (Ospar) are meeting in Hamburg to continue the process of creating the framework required to implement the recycling of

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity



Women in the Ring No 3: Linda van den Berg with trainer Billy Webster at Fitzroy Lodge, Lambeth, south London

David Sandison

redundant North Sea oil platforms. This programme is expected to cost the oil industry around £10bn to £15bn.

While the prospect of forcing "environmentally hostile" oil companies to spend some of their profits on removing redundant material might produce a warm glow in the hearts of the public and green organisations, it is worth noting that the environmental evidence upon which this "green milestone" has been achieved is proving difficult to obtain.

Since I asked questions associated with this programme relating to energy balances, carbon dioxide burdens, landfill problems and the precise nature of the threat posed by redundant oil platforms in *Nature* some two months ago senior green personnel have found it necessary to express regret that I have had the temerity to question the Ospar decision – for which they were largely responsible – in public. I have seen no more than opinionated historical material in justification of the Ospar decision.

I have no doubt that credible information about the different options for redundant oil platform management exists. How to obtain it, what it reveals and how it has been interpreted is another matter, given the triumphalism which has prevailed since the Brent Spar affair. Before asking oil companies to spend billions on what may well prove to be only a marginal improvement to the marine environment, perhaps zealous green organisations should look beyond an agenda designed to pillory the oil industry to those perennial environmental problems crying out for even modest funding.

The oil companies, the green movement, governments and the public would surely, if a review of the evidence justified it, welcome a revision of the Ospar decision to one which required a diversion of some of the oil companies' profits into sensible environmental improvement measures rather than one which is seemingly based

more on environmental dogma than on wisdom and analysis.

PETE WILKINSON  
Pete Wilkinson Environmental  
Consultancy  
Halesworth, Suffolk

The writer is a former director of Greenpeace

## Genetic bullies

Sir: Successive British governments have allowed themselves to be browbeaten by Washington in the pocket of American agribusiness and to plonk themselves between me and my grocer: "Eat genetically modified soya, or else!"

Charles Arthur (Comment, 16 February) wishes the scientists could get into a debate currently dominated by journalists, politicians and big business, who give me assurances in plenty but few facts. So do I. That is one reason why a restriction of the ubiquitous GM soya and a moratorium on further releases is essential – it would give me a chance to catch up and catch on.

Delaying would also give us all time to assess what the longer-term fall-out might be. In this small island we have a dangerously restricted (and dwindling) natural heritage of plants and wildlife. I'd not like to see what is left wiped out by superplants or herbicides in

favour of horizon-to-horizon monocultures where "birds sing". Don't think it couldn't happen. I am just back from Costa Rica, where I saw the future as the US fruit companies would have wanted it to be.

MICHAEL ATKINSON  
Ilkley, West Yorkshire

Sir: I would be interested to hear what legal position is given the obvious lack of choice when visiting the supermarket. The food industry is surely leaving itself open to extensive legal action should this go wrong.

Supermarkets and those producing the GM crops should be forced to maintain a large insurance provision to cover future costs. If the insurance industry considers there to be no risk then the premiums would be minimal.

Leave it to the professional pessimists to evaluate the risks.

IAIN ECKERSALL  
Torphichen, West Lothian

## Motorised hunt

Sir: It is the pleasure of Joanne Welch and Michael Silverleaf (letter, 13 February) to walk quietly in the country; of others, to drive around following the hunt. The activities are not totally compatible and I share their dislike of motorised hunt-following. But in

fairness I have to ask on how many days a year do the hunt and its followers come out?

IAN LESLIE  
Ludlow, Shropshire

Sir: I am sure Mr Kidd and the 4x4 drivers he knows conscientiously avoid driving on byways with damaged surfaces (letter, 13 February). But far too many do not.

Today I rode along a bridlepath that has been classified as a "road used as a public path" (or RUPP). It was scarred with ruts a foot and more deep, and in one place a 4x4 driver had not been content to follow the ruts left by his predecessors but had created a separate set of his own, so that the rider or walker was faced with four parallel ruts.

A green lane I know near Essendon used to offer a very pleasant ride in the 1960s and 1970s: one could cantor almost the whole way along it. Today it is so rutted that many riders prefer to go round by the road instead.

The trouble is that too many bridleways have been classified as RUPPs or BOATS ("byways open to all traffic").

ROBERT NOWELL  
New Barnet, Hertfordshire

Sir: Mr Geoff Wilson (letter, 9 February), writing in response to Duff Hart-Davis's feature "Two

legs good, four wheels bad", states that only 4 per cent of the country's rights of way may be used by vehicles. That is incorrect. The vast majority of rights of way may be used by vehicles. They are called "roads".

ALAN MANSFIELD  
Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Leicestershire

## Tough on disabled

Sir: I broke my neck playing football in 1978, which left me paralysed from the neck down and dependent on state benefits. Since then I have had to listen to a succession of Tory ministers labelling benefit claimants as scroungers, fraudsters, wasters and losers who sit contentedly at home waiting eagerly for the next benefit cheque to arrive.

I woke up on 2 May 1997 with a feeling of exhilaration – not because I thought the election of "New" Labour would bring a decent income for disabled people, but because I believed it would mean a change in attitudes, and the end of vilification of the vast majority of people who live on benefits because they have no choice.

Sadly, with his parroting of Tory rhetoric and talk of the need for the "something-for-nothing welfare state", Tony Blair has indicated that the song remains the same: benefit claimants, no matter what their circumstances, remain social pariahs. Indeed, the assault on the disabled in particular has intensified to a level that even the Conservative leadership never contemplated. Being "tough" on the powerless may give Mr Blair and Mr Darling a feeling of political machismo, but from where I am sitting it is a chilling development.

I find it ironic that, a week after the "outrage" caused by Glenn Hoddle's implication that the disabled people are in some way to blame for their situation, Labour policy reinforces this view by intimating that the disabled are just another group who just will not help themselves.

CHARLES WHEELER  
Stretford, Greater Manchester

## Mention the war

Sir: Michael Naumann, the German Culture Minister, overlooks important facts when he accuses the British of an obsession with the Second World War. Britain neither started nor lost it. For Britain, the War was a question of the defence of democracy, and of survival, not an attempt at world domination. The former deserves to be remembered with pride, rather than treated as a mere footnote to the horrors of the Third Reich.

Since 1945 Germans have a horror of anything military. Any interest in matters military, in the German mind, gets all too easily confused with militarism and war-mongering. The difference, however, is important, even more so in the light of Germany's new and more assertive role of participation in UN-sanctioned military action abroad.

JULIA KRAEHLING-SMITH  
Belfast

Sir: I have been living in Germany for some years and find some British people's attitudes towards Germans rather embarrassing.

Germans have a better attitude. They play American war films dubbed into German on television, where invariably the Americans win, and no one bats an eyelid. Some of the younger generation, whose grandparents were only youngsters during the war, still feel guilt for the two world wars. And yet we British continue to perpetuate memories that should not be forgotten but handled with more sensitivity.

It is fine to mention the war in Germany, but not in the manner that some tabloids and football fans insist on doing.

GEOFF DAVISON  
Vietnam, Germany

## Off the rails

Sir: Your leading article of 12 February called for one of the train companies to lose its franchise. This ignores the legally binding nature of the contracts under which the companies operate.

My enforcement powers are strictly limited under the Railways Act and I can only terminate a franchise if an operator defaults on its contract. I cannot fine a company retrospectively for poor performance. What I can do is issue a provisional order threatening a financial penalty, payable only if the service does not improve. Or where I am satisfied that the breach has been remedied, I can take the route I have taken recently and negotiate a package of compensatory benefits for passengers.

Renegotiation of performance targets and penalties is one area on which the Government may wish to issue guidance to the Shadow Strategic Rail Authority. They may also wish to consider strengthening the enforcement powers in the forthcoming legislation. Meanwhile, I will continue to use my existing enforcement powers to the full.

JOHN O'BRIEN  
Director of Passenger Rail  
Franchising  
London SE1

## Immortal Dawkins

Sir: Richard Dawkins and Stephen Pinker ("At the altar of the atheists", 13 February) are wrong about souls. The ghost in the machine is a confused, 17th-century idea that never had much going for it. They should read Aquinas, who holds that the soul is the form of the body.

I thought experiment on this theme: broadcast a digitalised recording of Jacqueline du Pré playing Elgar into space; blow up all worlds with atmospheres – the music is dead. But its form, exact, intensely personal, lasts as long as the radio signals radiate, which recent physics suggests might be for ever.

If we could digitalise the bodily histories of Dawkins and Pinker, they too could be preserved in ever-expanding radiant arcs. Perhaps God has something like this in mind for them.

WILLIAM MYERS  
Leicester

## A candlelit dinner for two, with a blazing row thrown in

THIS MORNING

I have received a letter which casts such an unusual light on British life that I feel I ought to pass it on to the gentle readership of *The Independent* without altering a word. Here it is:

Dear Mr Kingston.

Yesterday, on St Valentine's Day, I made the mistake of taking my wife out to a romantic dinner. It had not occurred to me before, but there must be many many couples who are hoodwinked by commercial pressures into lavishing a night out on each other on 14 February, and who therefore find themselves in a restaurant inhabited solely by romantic couples. So it was with us.

The restaurant we went to had only tables for two, and all those two were male and female, and we all

stared into each other's eyes and held hands a bit for fear of looking unromantic.

It would have been terrible except that there was one couple in the restaurant who did not obey the rules. They were quite an attractive couple, perhaps in their early thirties, but they had absolutely no concept of keeping their voices down. As a result, whenever any of us temporarily ran out of things to say, our attention strayed to this pair, and their conversation.

He was Jeremy, she was Cynthia, and to begin with they just talked about the children and the au pair, but then they got on to the subject of a woman, called Jenny, and the tone changed. Jenny was obviously Cynthia's best pal. She obviously suspected that there was something going on between her husband and

Jenny, and from laughing and denying it, Jeremy suddenly lowered his voice (still audibly) and began defiantly admitting it.

"Jenny's a lot of fun," he said, "which is more than can be said of some people present, who seem to have lost their fun factor somewhere along the way."

"Fun in what way?" said Cynthia icily.

"Every way," said Jeremy. "Especially horizontally."

A choking sound rippled softly round the restaurant. It was clear that most of us were listening. But Jeremy and Cynthia couldn't care less. Within five minutes the row had escalated into a blazing argument, only ended by Cynthia getting to her feet, slapping him and walking out.

There was a ghastly silence as

Jeremy asked him, not for the bill, not even for a drink, but for the loan of a mobile phone. It was brought. He dialled a number. Someone answered.

"Darling!" cried Jeremy. "Why don't you pop over?"

We couldn't believe it. He was asking someone else over to finish off the ruined meal. Surely it couldn't be...?

Ten minutes later the door opened and a lovely girl came in. "Jeremy! Darling!" he cried. Suddenly the door opened and – guess what? Cynthia swept back in! We thought for a moment there would be a battle royal, but they seemed to want to talk it over like adults and all sat down together. It didn't last. Voices flared again, tempers frayed and broke, chairs scraped back – and what do you think happened? The two women linked arms and strode out together!

Not long after, the lone Jeremy, in tears by now, paid and went, and all the tables started chattering animatedly to each other, as you might imagine, and we all ended up the best of friends. And there it might have rested had I not accidentally bumped into Jeremy the next day in the street.

"Forgive a stranger for asking," I said, "but how did it all work out?"

"All what?"

"Last night... Cynthia, Jenny..."

"Oh, that." He laughed. "It worked out fine. We got paid."

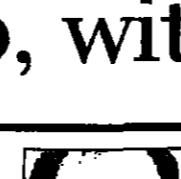
"Paid?"

He pulled out a card. "Perhaps this will explain." He passed on, and I looked at the card. It read: "Street Theatre and Restaurant Performers. No More Dull Dining Rooms and Silent Valentines! Delight your Diners with a Drama! Also Murder Mysteries, etc, etc." There then followed phone numbers, etc.

What do you think, Mr Kingston? Do you think that restaurants should be allowed to imitate unscrupulous BBC TV shows and foist fake fellow diners on an unsuspecting public in this underhand and deceitful way?

Yours etc

Miles Kingston writes: Never mind about that – just let me have the name of the restaurant. I want to book for next Valentine's Day...



MILES  
KINGTON

*'There was a ghastly silence as Jeremy rubbed his cheek and brooded. Then...'*

Jeremy rubbed his cheek and brooded. Then...

"Waiter!" he cried. The waiter

## A small helping of humble pie for the Prime Minister

LORD SAINSBURY says that any direct financial interest that he may have in biotechnology is held in a blind trust and is therefore above board, or at least below concern. He also says that he is an enthusiast for scientific advancement, including biotechnology.

There's the rub. We can accept, on the evidence so far, that the Science Minister has behaved properly. We can understand that, unlike Lord Simon and his BP shares, Lord Sainsbury cannot unload his huge, billion-pound personal shareholdings. A blind trust is the approved solution to this dilemma.

But this still leaves a minister intimately connected with the food trade, who is personally enthusiastic about biotechnology and its potential for British business, right at the heart of a government that has come under heavy fire for its policy on the issue. The very fact that Lord Sainsbury said that he had had to absent himself from a recent Cabinet committee meeting on biotechnology gives the lie to Downing Street's suggestion that he is really concerned with science and not food.

It's no good the Prime Minister dismissing, as he did yesterday, the whole furor as a storm in the media drinking-cup. The press may have made a right muddle of the science, and got itself into a lather about much that has been here for years. It could even be accused of making far more than it should have done out of a potential conflict of interest in Lord Sainsbury's case. There is something unhealthy at the moment in the press's desire to hound a man as soon as it scents blood.

But what cannot be waved away is the simple fact that people are instinctively concerned by anything that messes around with what they and their children eat. They worry - rightly or wrongly - about the safety of their food. They distrust, the more so after BSE, scientific pronouncements and the value of government assurances. They not only want testing of new technology to be carried out, they want it to be seen to be carried out. And they worry about developments pushed by large corporations.

Which brings us back to Lord Sainsbury. It is not his fault that he is embroiled in this mess. He is, by all accounts, a decent, honourable chap who wants to be left alone to do his job and promote science in industry. There is, at this stage, no reason why he should resign. Tony Blair is right about that.

But the Prime Minister must learn from this food furor. First, he should start to appreciate that people have legitimate concerns about the food that ends up in their bellies. And second, he must understand that while businessmen can bring certain fresh qualities to government, they're not omniscient and can lead to more trouble than they are worth.



## Some answers to the Kurdish question

THE KURDISH PKK party which has organised the mass take-over of Greek embassies around Europe, is a hard outfit. No one should be in any doubt about that. Nor should there be any doubt about the party's leader, Abdullah Ocalan, whose rapid ejection from the Greek embassy in Nairobi and extradition to Turkey has set off this explosion of protest. The leader of the PKK for the last 14 years, he is a terrorist with an appalling record of murder and torture.

But, like the IRA, the PKK is a mirror image of the forces that have suppressed it. There are people for whom history has shown no remorse. The Kurds are one of them. Caught in their mountain homeland at the point where Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran all meet, they have suffered the fate of being continually hounded by those nations.

On the whole the Iraqi Kurds have come out with a degree of dignity and some democracy, with their suffering at the hands of Saddam Hussein rightly condemned and their interests partially protected by the allies. The Kurds from Turkey have been less fortunate. Oppressed with the utmost brutality by the Turkish army, they have responded in kind, matching terror for terror. They have also, as we see now, taken their cause to Europe, in demonstrations, assassinations and hostage-taking that have shown as much organisational sophistication as ruthlessness. Seizing Greek official buildings in 10 cities simultaneously cannot be interpreted as an outpouring of spontaneous anger. It is clearly the result of a plan long laid, probably directed originally at Italy when it was considering extraditing the PKK leader, now directed at Greece.

The demonstrations and occupations must be ended decisively, and Turkey and Greece must be supported. Whatever the rights and wrongs of causes, the principles of extradition and the sanctity of diplomatic representa-

tion are far too crucial for compromise to be acceptable.

That said, Europe must also accept that the Kurds have been forced to take their struggle outside their own countries, and have the means to do so. There are now Kurdish communities throughout Europe, most of whom are genuine victims of political oppression at home with a right to asylum abroad.

At the same time, Turkey, a determined applicant for European Union membership and a stalwart ally in Nato, must be considered as part of a wider Europe.

The one fact needs to be balanced with the other. Turkey should be encouraged in its drive to join the EU. It should be supported in its extradition and trial of Ocalan. But at the same time it should be quietly made clear that the trial must be fair, and seen to be fair and that, in the end, the Turkish government will have to exercise democratic control of its security forces in the east of the country and deal by negotiation with Kurdish demands for autonomy. That is what being part of modern Europe means.

## The Government must listen to our fears about GM food

WHEN CONFRONTED by a foreigner who does not speak English, it is our national trait to shout Very Very Loud in the hope that amplification will assist understanding. Similarly the Government's response to the public's failure to heed one of its messages is simply to say the same thing again and again in the belief that we poor dull creatures will get the point in the end.

In the handling of public fears about genetically modified food, however, repetition will not be enough to turn back the tide of doubt and confusion. Food scares are far more difficult to defuse than the other vicissitudes that make life fraught for governments. When it comes to what we eat and feed our families, we do not fall as readily as us into party loyalties, nor do we give a leader, even one as popular as Mr Blair, the benefit of the doubt. This is why he now faces every Government's basic nightmare - a popular coalition of resistance spanning all social classes and political persuasions. Faced with a range of resistance that includes Greenpeace, John Redwood and the Mothers Union, the Government must realise that its damage-limitation strategy is doing everything but limit the damage.

Tony Blair has prospered as a politician because he embodies reassurance. People are inclined to believe what he says; this has been his greatest political capital. When he says that he is "sure" that GM foods are safe and can lead to "tastier, healthier and cheaper products", he is squandering this vital advantage. First, we know that he doesn't

really know whether his statement is true. Scientists are divided on the long-term consequences of consuming genetically modified foods. Mr Blair has stuck his neck out too far in the direction of unsullied optimism and therefore we take his becalming words with a pinch of unmodified salt.

In the role of Lord Sainsbury, the Science Minister who owns a GM patent, is a major complication. David Sainsbury is a thoughtful and popular businessman, brimming with ideas to stimulate economic growth, and a long-standing proponent of a broad centre-left coalition in British politics. He has every New Labour virtue, except, in this case, intuitive political judgement.

Lord Sainsbury was not sufficiently open about the nature of the biotechnology product he owns - one integral to the process of genetic modification - which was transferred into a blind trust three days after he entered the Government. The claim that he absents himself from discussions of GM food policy in the Cabinet sub-committee on bio-technology looks flimsy.

An odd defence is rolled out in such cases, namely that the businessmen who enter politics are too naive to realise that there may be appearances of conflicts of interest between their assets and their new activities. The affable Minister for European Trade, Lord Simon of Highbury, was spared censure on these grounds when it was revealed that he had not declared substantial shares in an off-shore trust.

But this excuse washes less well every time it is used. It looks very grey



ANNE  
MCELVOY

When it comes to what we eat and feed our families, we do not fall readily into party loyalties

in Lord Sainsbury's case. After Lord Simon, not to mention the interminable complexities of Geoffrey Robinson's affairs, businessmen turning their hand to government should be aware that it is not sufficient to transfer their previous dealings to a blind trust and say as little as possible about them. The more often a minister is revealed as having stashed away some interest that might affect executive decisions, the less convincing are Mr Blair's guarantees that his government is transparent and sleaze-free. You cannot simultaneously send the two messages "What you see is what you get" and "What you see is the bits of this minister's backroom political interests that are not bundled up in an anonymous trust until he leaves office." Businessmen-politicians must pay the price of exposing

their existing interests and assets. Downing Street says the Prime Minister is "frustrated" by the way his message is being drowned out by an alliance of concerned folk and media hype. Certainly, on the topic of GM foods, rationality is thrown to the winds. Yes, there is an outbreak of Mad Headline Writer's disease in parts of the media - first prize to *The Express* for an understated little number that read, "Human genes in GM food: protest at move to 'cannibalism'".

But Downing Street's complaint is a bit like Rex Harrison in *My Fair Lady* demanding, "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" It is a proposition reasonable only in its own, strictly limited terms. Mr Blair's "frustration" rests on the expectation that the public should always believe that he is right every occasion. He is in danger of believing the mythology that his message is sacred and cannot possibly be proved wrong.

This tendency has unsevered me for some time. At the last party conference, I was dining with a senior minister on the day questions were first raised about GM foods. I ventured some worry about the contents of my pasta. To this the minister snorted that my reservations were mere peasant suspicion of technology. He would happily eat any such products, he said. It struck me that my suspicion was based on the natural conservatism of the consumer, aware of the relatively low level of information and bargaining power I possess compared to the right and profit margins of the food industry. The minister, on the other hand, erred vastly on the side of in-

caution because he had accepted so uncritically the Government's embrace of business. What surprised me was not so much my companion's wild abandon to experimental habits, but his cavalier expectation that the public should share it.

Even now, Mr Blair is pursuing the strategy of slapping down consumer doubts, rather than accepting that they exist, and answering them. On presentation, the Government has erred uncharacteristically. Using Jack Cunningham, a machine politician best known for his defence of the nuclear industry, as the front man for the pro-GM policy is an own goal. In most households, decisions about what is eaten are taken by women. If I may presume to minister to the spin doctors, might it not be a better idea to wheel out a sturdy female to replace Nuclear Jack in the battle to convince us that eating hi-tech tomato paste will not turn us into aliens?

But presentational skills alone will not do. Not least the need for a more thoughtful approach to the consequences of genetically modified food. The Government must stop telling us that we are foolish to be concerned. That never reassured anyone. Far better to tighten testing and licensing procedures along the same lines as those applied to new drugs on the market and to emphasise, even after testing, that clear labelling is essential. As Mr Blair said after his election, politicians must never forget that they are the servants of the people who put them in a position of trust. That means taking the public's fears seriously - not just shouting them down.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"It's a dreadful thing to have done."  
Margaret Cook,  
ex-wife of the Foreign Secretary, on her memoirs

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"God in creating Man somewhat overestimated his ability."  
Oscar Wilde,  
Irish writer

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## MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD  
World comment on developments in the Kosovo peace talks

IT IS distressing to see Washington threatening aggression against what is an independent member of the UN. It is important for the other permanent members to take note of the latest US threats, which, if carried out, will drive yet another nail into the disintegrating coffin of security and law. Yugoslavia's neighbours need to be wary of the

manner in which policies are driving Kosovo towards independence.  
*Times of India*

CLINTON HAS committed 4,000 GIs for a peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. Congress should be involved before the president commits more US troops to another peacekeeping mission. Putting GIs in harm's way demands caution and approval from the people's representatives. Getting Congress's bless-

ing should have come before Clinton promised the troops.  
*San Antonio News, US*

THE SERBS have been unreasonable by demanding that the Kosovars should sign the prin-

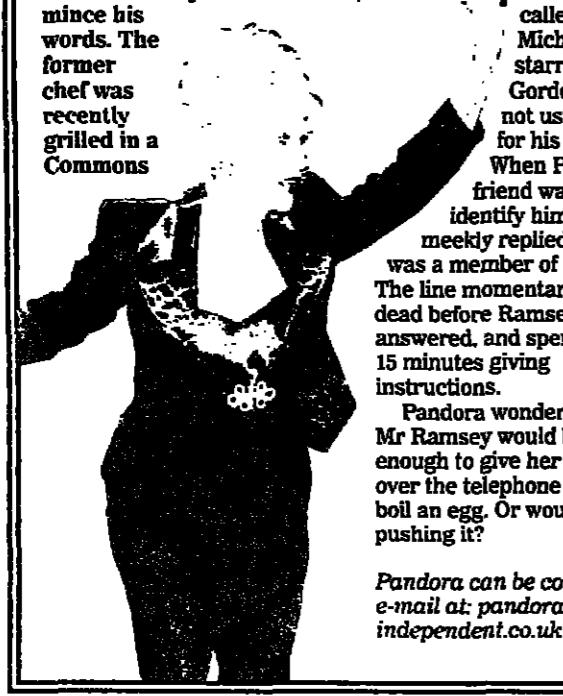
## PANDORA

A NEW "currency" will soon start changing hands in the nation's shops and supermarkets. The currency, which refugee groups have dubbed the "asyl", is a voucher system about to be introduced by the Home Office as a means of giving cashless refugees the opportunity to obtain food and basic toiletries. The notes are being designed by Home Office staff; one wonders whether they will be able to resist the lure of using the likeness of our great leader, Mr Blair, in place of the more traditional image of Her Majesty.

THE ROYAL Opera House chairman Sir Colin Southgate's speech at the House's topping-out ceremony yesterday was interesting not only for his continual use of the phrase "topping off" instead of "topping out". He also lavished praise on the award-winning ROH orchestra; several of its soloists gave recitals to "top off" the ceremony. Can this be the same orchestra that Sir Colin wanted to stand down for a year, under his cost-cutting plan?

THERE WAS an other-worldly feeling to the EMI Songbook launch at the Abbey Road Studios. Ralph Steadman, the cartoonist, and the author Iain Banks were among the celebrities who regarded the audience with their wacky wit, while examples of their ideas for album compilations adorned the walls. But in the heavens, or at least in the upstairs studio, Pandora was told, the composer John Williams and the London Symphony Orchestra were fine-tuning the music for the *Star Wars* prequel, *The Phantom Menace*. Checking back with the studio, she was told by a spokesperson: "We can't say anything this week; maybe next week we will." However, the force behind the LSO confirmed the sessions – which ended last night.

THE INDUSTRY Minister Ian McCartney doesn't mince his words. The former chef was recently grilled in a Commons



corridor by the Tory MP John Bercow over why restaurant owners should pay a minimum wage to staff who receive sizeable tips.

"My goodness, I often give waiters a £5 tip," Bercow reportedly bellowed at the minister.

Bringing his catering experience to the fore McCartney growled: "Listen son, pompous idiots like you got a damn sight more than soup in their soup."

THE BROADCASTING Monitoring Company, a sister company of the *Financial Times*, is not living up to its name. Yesterday it sent some information to the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, addressing it to Charlie Whelan. The high-profile spin doctor, who enjoyed a spot of publicity recently when he resigned as press secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, left the union about five years ago. Perhaps someone ought to provide the monitoring organisation with a cuttings service.

THE FORMER lover of President Clinton, Gennifer Flowers (pictured) is to dine with the Master and Fellows of University College, Oxford – where Clinton was a Rhodes scholar. The dinner is expected to take place tonight, two days before Flowers is due to address the Oxford Union on "Surviving Sex, Power and Propaganda". Pandora would love to be a fly on the wall at this function. Given that Gennifer described Clinton as "lusty and passionate and insatiable in the bedroom" her after-dinner banter with the mighty academics of Oxford could be highly educational.

IN A moment of madness, a friend of Pandora's bought a rabbit from a butcher. When he got it home, he realised that he had no idea how to cook it. Taking his life into his hands, he called up the Michelin-starred chef Gordon Ramsey, not usually noted for his charm. When Pandora's friend was asked to identify himself, he meekly replied that he was a member of the public. The line momentarily went dead before Ramsey answered, and spent the next 15 minutes giving instructions.

Pandora wonders whether Mr Ramsey would be kind enough to give her advice over the telephone on how to boil an egg. Or would that be pushing it?

Pandora can be contacted by e-mail at: [pandora@independent.co.uk](mailto:pandora@independent.co.uk)

## Politicians are such tragic groupies

FOR A publicity-seeking band with an album to plug, the Brits always offer the perfect platform. We will know by now whether last night's MP-studded event saw an ice bucket emptied over the head of a Labour politician.

Last year John Prescott's unlikely effort to appear trendy was doomed by Mr Dambert Nobacon of Chumbawumba. Last night there was no shortage of potential victims – from Cheril Blair to Chris Smith, from Mr Mowlam to Peter Hain, from George Robertson to Paul Boateng. By all accounts there were up to 60 MPs and a sizeable portion of the Cabinet at the London Docklands Arena. New Labour was rockin' in the aisles.

The parent of a victim of the Troubles in Ulster noted that he had been trying for a year to see Dr Mowlam. "If I were a pop star I'm sure they'd pay me more attention," he added.

You bet. There's no surer way of getting into earshot of New Labour than having a star at the top of the charts. But make sure it's the pop charts and not the classical charts, which count for far less in



## DAVID LISTER

As self-made men and women, rock stars are often right-wing, selfish and materialistic

terms of street cred. Following last year's Brits, Peter Mandelson was asked, before his own exit from the charts, how many members of the Cabinet had ever attended a concert at the Wigmore Hall. He changed the subject.

Labour governments choose their stars carefully. They must have mass popular appeal and epitomise the height of fashion, cool and

cutting edge. It's in fact far from a New Labour phenomenon. It was old Labour in the form of Harold Wilson who first exploited the public relations coup of inviting them to Downing Street soirees. John Lennon even referred to him as "that nice Mr Wilson" on television. How could Edward Heath conducting a symphony orchestra compete with that?

Wilson's strategy was a seemingly clever one. The coming 1970 election was to allow 18-year-olds to vote for the first time. A trendy PM with pop star mates was more likely to get those first-timers on his side. But while The Beatles were built to last, some of Wilson's other guests at those soirees had a shelf life on their cooties. Who now remembers Kenny Lynch, a regular Downing Street visitor who repaid his hospitality most thoughtlessly by becoming a solid middle of the road?

That's the trouble with rock stars. They, their managers and their record company bosses are unpredictable. Worse. As self-made men and women they are more often than not right-wing, selfish and materialistic.

Blair has already had a lesson in

the rock world's curious political mix of Sixties hippie philosophy and self-centred individualism. Blur's Damon Albarn savaged Labour at a press conference devoted to Labour's further-education policy. Alan McGee, the man who discovered Oasis, was moved to describe Labour's welfare-to-work scheme as "soul-destroying, incredibly naive, ill-judged, unfair and Draconian, penalising the lifeblood of our cultural future".

In pop speak that counts as a measured response. As does Primal Scream's Bobby Gillespie, who, when asked if pop stars should go to Number Ten, replied: "Only with a pound of Semtex".

And the Cabinet has not yet responded to Jarvis Cocker's observation not to be found in the New Labour manifesto, that "if you wanted to be in a band, or you wanted to be a painter, or you wanted to do anything, you'd go on the dole".

Logical? Who cares? Politically inconsistent? Probably. Essentially parasitic. Almost certainly. That is the core of a rock star's philosophy. And they are all the more charismatic for it. It is from politicians that

we expect a measure of consistency and statesmanship, and a distance from the mercurial, back-of-a-card-sleeve ideologies of the stars.

But there is a much better reason why New Labour should end its flirtation with pop, a flirtation that sometimes resembles the awe-struck blind devotion of the groupie. It is not just the resentment of the rest of the arts world, though that has certainly helped lead to Blair and Smith dropping all references to Cool Britannia.

It is a gut feeling, even – perhaps especially – among Blair's own generation that rock equals rebellion; that both popular culture and society in general need an outrageous, nonconforming, egocentric element with a concentration span as short as a CD single. That this nonconforming element should inhabit a fantasy world of riches, sex, poetry, all in Bacchian dimensions.

That Dr Mowlam is a gifted politician but not a rock chick. That John Prescott should not share a hall with Chumbawumba. That one of rock music's targets should be the government of the day. As, inevitably, Mr Blair one day it will be.

## Don't privatise the Tube by the back door, Mr Prescott



## KEN LIVINGSTONE

We'll modernise the Tube, but we won't be helped by the pitiful dullards who run the system now

ANYONE WHO braved the Tube strike to come to my Monday night monster meeting at Methodist Central Hall would, of course, be left in no doubt over the immediate issue on everyone's mind – the undemocratic attempt to rig the ballot that will select Labour's candidate for mayor of London. However, it was also clear that the first priority that Londoners will want their new mayor to have is sorting out their daily transport nightmares.

Although London's traffic was worse than normal during the RMT's two-day Tube strike, for most travellers it was a question of just being a bit worse than the normal daily drudgery of trying to get to and from work, with a lot of the impact reduced due to the school half-term cutting the number of cars on the roads at crucial times.

In one office after another across London, people's main topic of conversation is no longer who's bedding whom in the soaps, but who had the worst nightmare journey to work that morning. When you get to work, your productivity will be down owing to the congestion and the tension of the journey. So far this year I have been trapped in two-hour-long delays on the Jubilee Line, and it has got so bad that I routinely have to allow an extra 10 to 15 minutes on any journey to cope with unexpected delays.

Congestion is destroying our quality of life, even life itself. Just by breathing the atmosphere, Londoners double their chance of getting lung cancer; half of all the children who live on a main road have asthma, and every winter car fumes build up into a toxic smog that kills only hundreds if we're lucky, but thousands in a bad year. London certainly has all the worst transport problems that afflict Britain's other cities – but on a larger scale, simply because of the size of the city.

Pandora wonders whether Mr Ramsey would be kind enough to give her advice over the telephone on how to boil an egg. Or would that be pushing it?

Pandora can be contacted by e-mail at: [pandora@independent.co.uk](mailto:pandora@independent.co.uk)

wages and conditions (although I am personally in favour of cutting the conditions of some London Transport bosses by taking away their chauffeur-driven cars and forcing them to use the abysmal service they so cynically impose on Londoners). London Transport bosses, however, clearly hope to use Mr Prescott's new finance initiative as a cover for getting rid of more staff and bumping up fares at an even faster rate.

Our problems arose because the Treasury wanted to sell off the Tube to the highest bidder. Though John Prescott was able to defeat this scheme, he was blocked by the Treasury from raising the £7bn he needs to deal with the backlog of Tube repairs he inherited from the Tory government in the most simple way – by increasing London's business rate and council tax.

The PPP is the result of a compromise, although really it's just borrowing money under a different guise. Even if the Treasury was opposed to funding Tube repairs by tax increases, there was no reason why it could not have given London Transport the power to borrow on the markets by raising a simple bond issue. It's still not clear how much more interest Londoners will have to pay because we are going for the more expensive option of PPP.

It may be a year yet before we see the final figures, and John Prescott has made it clear that PPP will go ahead only if those figures add up. It's not surprising if, in this long period of confusion, trade unionists have taken industrial action to defend their jobs. This has led the extreme right to demand that the Government bring in legislation to ban strikes in the public sector. This classic barny authoritarian approach overlooks two important facts. First, in those jobs where strikes have been banned, such as

the police service, the state has had to undertake to pay a higher level of wages in order to make the ban acceptable to those it is imposed upon. Second: after the right to vote, the right to withdraw his or her labour is the most important freedom the individual has. There is not a democracy anywhere in the world that does not have a free trade union movement, and it is significant that one of the first actions in any Stalinist or Fascist regime has been the suppression of free trade unionism. I'm confident that in the end John Prescott will find a mechanism that allows us to modernise the Tube, but he is unlikely to be helped by the pitiful dullards who currently run the system.

Ever since they escaped from the control of the GLC their main priority, apart from lining their own pockets with huge salary hikes and perks, has been to get rid of as many staff as possible. Conductors were sacked even though it meant a huge increase in the time buses have to wait at stops.

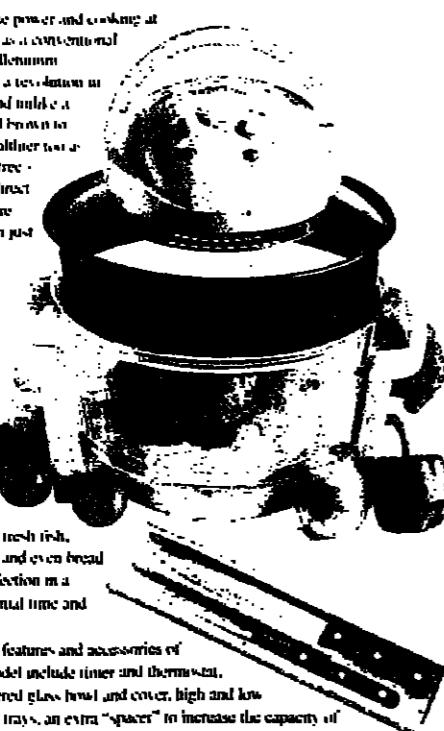
Tens of millions of pounds that should have been spent on repairs to Underground track and trains was wasted introducing automatic ticket barriers just so that ticket collectors could be added to the dole queues. Every time I'm caught in another Tube delay because of signalling or track failure, I think about the cost of those new ticket barriers.

Although the railways allow passengers to claim money back when delayed inordinately, to be really effective the cost of these rebates should come out of the salaries of the rail bosses and the dividends otherwise paid to shareholders so as to bring to bear "the spur of competition and the rigours of the market" if I may be so bold to quote Tony Blair's replacement for Clause Four.

If we could get our buses, tubes and trains once again running for the benefit of the passengers, people would be willing to leave their cars at home. But that is the way it must be done. Improve public transport first, rather than impose a culture of blame and penalties on the motorists.

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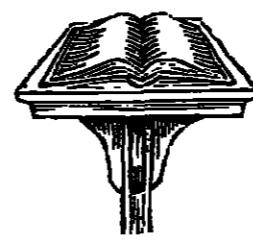
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## The dangers of paternalism



## PODIUM

PERRI 6  
From a lecture by the  
Demos research  
associate delivered to  
the Westminster Ethical  
Policy Forum

to pick up the bill for the medical care. Now that the NHS is seeking to recover these costs from the vehicle insurance plans of the individuals affected, the ground for government paternalism may be undermined. However, the principle states that if individuals were to consent to the regulation – and many it seems clear would – it is permissible even if there are additional contractual requirements upon

individuals for any private insurance they may have covering such risks.

On the other hand, the beef-on-the-bone ban seems to fail several limbs of the test. It is far from clear that citizens would consent if we were told the full information available to ministers at the time it was imposed, and if the real reason was not one of public health but of negotiating strategies in Europe in seeking the lifting of the export ban, then it is not even clear that the Government's explanation of the ban was in good faith.

The evidence seems to be lacking of great diligence in finding out what would work to prevent Credit Suisse-Jakob disease. The evidence might have justified paternalistic health warnings or the publication of information on food labels about what they are choosing, and letting them decide for themselves. But there is no possible justification for politicians claiming to know better than I or any other shopper or diner does what kind of food we want to eat, and banning things that many of us may well want. That is paternalism too far.

# Truth is no stranger to fiction



**DEBORAH ORR**  
Kureishi's ex-wife reacted angrily: 'He calls it a novel. It's total hypocrisy. Nobody believes it'

WHAT ARE we to make of Roger? We meet him when he has been acrimoniously separated from his wife for a year. He has just collected his two young sons, aged five and a half and four, from the au pair, and taken them to the park.

He lets them loose in the adventure playground, then reads his paper, until it starts raining. Then he takes them to the park's cafe, orders them doughnuts and chats up the woman at the next table, until another woman points out to him that his two boys are at the far end of the room, rolling around on top of another boy who is screaming about being bitten. He then hustles them out of the cafe.

His parenting for that day apparently complete, he takes the boys back to their home. He has forgotten that the locks have been changed, so he and his children wait on the porch in the rain until darkness falls and their mother comes home from work.

Roger, however, has a problem. He is wearing his new chocolate-coloured suit and his beautiful new loafers, for that evening he is going to a publishing party, where he is to meet a woman he likes. He needs to borrow an umbrella or his outfit and his song *friend* will be ruined. His wife refuses to give him one, which incenses him so much that the two of them have a violent row in front of the children.

Roger has everything in common with Jay, who we encountered almost a year ago, in Hanif Kureishi's best-selling short novel, *Intimacy*. Jay talked us through his last night at home with his partner, Susan, before he walked out on her and his two sons, aged five and three. Perhaps the similarity of the two men isn't surprising, for Roger is the protagonist of "The Umbrella", a new short story by Kureishi published in the latest edition of the literary magazine *Granta*.

*Intimacy* caused quite a furore when it was published, not only because Jay behaved so dreadfully and so self-justifyingly, but also because Kureishi himself had left his wife and young twin sons a year before that. Kureishi's ex-wife, Tracey Scoffield, reacted angrily: "He says it's a novel, but that's an absolute abdication of responsibility. It's total hypocrisy... You may as well



Hanif Kureishi has not disguised a memoir as a novel, but used his own experiences to reveal universal truths through the medium of fiction

Peter MacDiarmid

call it a fish. Nobody believes that it's just pure fiction."

Kureishi's sister, Yasmin, also advertised her anger at the publication of *Intimacy*. She didn't object to the contents, but to what her brother had been saying in promotional interviews about his own life. "The memory of my father I hold very dear and I will do my best to ensure it is not fabricated for the entertainment of the public or for Hanif's profit."

Poor old Hanif, caught between two stools. Damned if he serves up reality as fiction, damned if he serves up fiction as reality. What a good job he doesn't work too much in television, where both of these activities earn anger not only from one's family but from the media, regulatory boards and the viewing public as well. What a shame he doesn't work in Washington, say as President of the United States or something, where such matters are not deemed nearly so important. Truth really has become the most difficult of concepts.

I didn't think I could be shocked any more by the lies and double-standards of the Lewinsky affair. But the scrutiny which the journalist Christopher Hitchens has been subjected to has put the garnish on the BSE sandwich. Hitchens, many friends and fellow democrats have declared, must be cast out of polite society for his part in the President's hounding.

What was his crime? He noticed that Sidney Blumenthal, a top White House aide, had lied to the witness stand, denying he had spread rumours that Monica Lewinsky was a "stalker" and "a predatory and unstable sexually demanding woman". Since Blumenthal has told Hitchens those very things, he begged to contradict, swearing an affidavit that Blumenthal had said this not just to him but to others as well. The bastard told the truth.

Rather like those bastards who made *Chickens*, a documentary about illegal gay prostitution in Glasgow. Everything in the harrowing documentary was true, except that the "clients" shown in the programme were not actually clients. Channel 4, which screened the programme, has been fined £10,000 for this deception, even though the people selling the underage gay sex, the actual victims with whom the documentary was concerned, were perfectly genuine.

The programme makers certainly made a stupid mistake in not informing viewers that the "clients" were being posed by actors, but since in television, as in life, "authenticity" has become more prized than truth, it's easy to understand why they did it.

But it is certainly strange that you are condemned for including truth in fiction, you are condemned for telling the truth in the "trial of the century", and you are condemned for revealing the truth about gay prostitution. It's not just on television chat shows that we can't tell truth from fiction any more. It's everywhere.

Why should this paradox have emerged, when it seems that our appetite for truth is so inexhaustible, and our need for verity so unquenchable? We can't get enough of autobiography and memoir. Every newspaper has to have several columns about the emotional traumas of real-life people. If there isn't "docusoap" on television then there's bound to be a chat show that may be trivial, but it must be true.

The work of politicians, actors, musicians and football managers can now, it appears, only be understood by close reading of their opinions and open discussion of their

personal situations. And the most admired artists are those who, like Tracey Emin, base their art on their own lives. No wonder there's not enough truth to go round.

Sometimes it all seems to me like pre-millennial tension, a collective hysteria, a desire to confess and be confessed to, to act out a modern version of Revelation, just in case the worst happens and the millennium really does mean Armageddon. Then I get a grip, tell myself to calm down, and think about it all some more.

Oddy, a pointer towards the reasons for our predilection for the plain unvarnished appears in Hanif Kureishi's *Intimacy*. Jay is reminiscing about his first days at university. "Philosophy was formal, abstract, cool. I chose it because I loved literature, and didn't want stories that had been poisoned by theorising. For me that was like food that had been chewed by

itself. It may be trivia, but it must be true.

Jay's worry is about literary theory spoiling his personal experience of literature. Ours appears broader, a worry about the things we are told being mediated, spun, angled, loaded. If we deal only in the truth, we imagine, then we can be certain

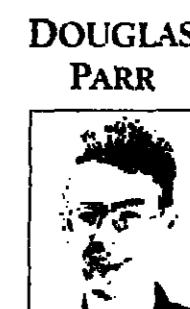
of what we see, read and hear. But that's not right at all, as these latest works of Hanif Kureishi attest.

His fiction has always been autobiographical, but while in the past he has explored race, class, sexuality, his new work is, if you will, far more intimate. Had he, like so many other writers nowadays, gone straight for memoir in his explorations of his wantonly broken family, all we would have learned is that Hanif Kureishi is not an admirable man. With that, he and his writings could have been dismissed.

But instead there is much more to be gleaned from these new pieces of writing, about why men do the things they do to their children, and the mothers of their children, and what it is they think they are doing to them, and for themselves. By fictionalising the truth, Kureishi distances himself from it and makes it not particular but general.

Which is why, while truth will always be stranger than fiction, fiction will always be the medium best placed to furnish us with universal truths. And it is the latter that we have lost sight of in our quest for factual detail. When it comes to verity, we've already had far too much of a good thing.

## RIGHT OF REPLY



**DOUGLAS PARR**  
The campaign director of Greenpeace replies to Charles Arthur's article on genetically engineered food.

AT LAST, issues with a scientific background have landed where they belong - in the political arena. The issues that confront us with genetically engineered (GE) food are, at root, political. They are issues of power and control over new technologies and the nature of future agricultural policy. Sadly, the Government pretends these can be dealt with by scientific committees examining the minutiae of gene insertion.

With all these questions about GE food and crop safety, has anyone looked at the alternative? In terms of what consumers want and environmental impact there's one winner - organic food. A paper in *Nature* magazine last year showed that yields of soya and maize were the same from organic agriculture as they were from intensive conventional farming. Why then does Britain have one of the lowest rates of organic agriculture in Europe?

None of this is to say that the science is unimportant - far from it, it is essential. But there are limits to what science can tell us. In this just as any other argument, you have to look at what values you bring to the (dinner) table. Science cannot answer the political and societal questions: Are gene-foods and crops necessary? What are the alternatives? How fair is it that the British public take the risks and the benefits go to an American multinational? What is acceptable risk? (and there are risks - as even Monsanto's chief executive accepts). If you examine these questions, you may well conclude that we should ban GE food and crops. But coherent answers are conspicuously lacking from government.

Tony Blair complains he is frustrated about the debate. Frankly, so are we. Greenpeace has been campaigning on this issue for 10 years now, but

# A ride on Darwin's bandwagon



## WEDNESDAY BOOK

**DARWIN'S SPECTRE: EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY IN THE MODERN WORLD**  
BY MICHAEL R ROSE, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, £18.95

IN THE Twenties, the noted Harvard physiologist W J Crozier warned his students against abandoning "proper" biological disciplines such as physiology and anatomy for the attractions of a "soft" subject such as evolution. "Evolution", he told them, "is a good topic for the Sunday supplements of newspapers, but it isn't science."

Seventy years on, few would dispute that evolutionary biology is now a "proper" science. As the great biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky put it: "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution". In recent years many evolutionary biologists have tried to stretch Dobzhansky's axiom even further, claiming that not just in biology, but also in the social sciences, nothing makes sense except in evolution's light. The paradox, though, is that the more Darwinism seems to explain about human behaviour, the

more that Darwinists write as if for Sunday supplements, abandoning scientific facts for speculative theories and flights of fancy.

This paradox is well expressed by *Darwin's Spectre*. Michael Rose, an expert on the biology of ageing, wants to reveal the universal importance of Darwinism. His book is divided into three sections. The first explores some of the key conceptual issues related to Darwinian theory (such as selection, adaptation and variation) while the second deals with applica-

tions of Darwinian theory (agriculture, medicine and eugenics). In both cases, the discussion is placed in a historical context. Rose provides, for instance, a potted biography of Darwin and a brief history of racial science.

You would be well advised to skip all this. The biology here will be familiar to anyone who has read authors such as Richard Dawkins, Steven Pinker and Randolph Nesse, while some of the history is distinctly dodgy. Any writer who admits that one of his key historical sources is Paul Johnson's *The Birth of the Modern World* does little to generate confidence.

The real interest of the book lies in the third section, in which Rose enters the debate about human nature. Rose wants to challenge traditional Darwinian explanations of human nature - such as evolutionary psychology - but from a Darwinian viewpoint. Evolutionary psychology holds that much of human behaviour has been shaped by natural selection, chosen because such behaviours helped our Stone Age ancestors the better to survive and reproduce.

Such a view, Rose observes, does not capture the key aspect of human behaviour - its "spectacular flexibility". Rose proposes a new theory, which he calls "immanent Darwinism". All human behaviour, he argues, is implicitly Darwinist not because we have specific behaviours shaped by natural selection, but because human beings constantly calculate the best ways of passing on their genes. "On this model", he writes, "behaviour is determined by an immanent process

of calculation taking place in the brain, not by genetic evolution arising from natural selection."

Rose accepts that "we don't experience our mental processes as having Darwinian ends". Rather, the Darwinian calculations that underlie our behaviour are subconscious. According to Rose, we all possess a "dynamic unconscious analogous to Freud's super-ego", except that it is driven by a "Darwinian calculus". The neural mechanism that calculates Darwinian odds, he suggests, is located in the brain's frontal lobes. "Our subjective experiences and calculations", Rose writes, "would be like dogs on a leash, the leash held by a Darwinian master of whom we are not normally aware."

This is all good fun, as Rose constantly jumps from one extravagant speculation to the next. The trouble is that speculation is rarely leavened by empirical facts. As Rose himself admits, "this type of theory potentially invites incredulity" and is "such an extravagant hypothesis" that it makes evolutionary psychology "attractive by contrast". Rose's theory jettisons the best aspects of evolutionary psychology - its ability to explain some human traits, such as language - while retaining its more dubious aspects, including the tendency to wild speculation and the attempt to explain all human behaviour in terms of reproductive fitness.

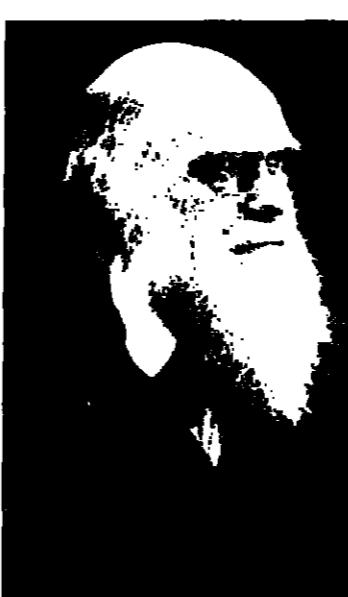
Ultimately, Rose's vision of human nature derives not from science but from political ideology. The contrast between evolutionary psychology and immanent Darwinism corresponds, he believes, to the debate between Keynesianism and monetarism. Just like Keynesians, evolutionary psychologists have abandoned a libertarian view of human nature. According to evolutionary psychology "the behaviour of humans as producers, consumers, or intermediaries will be

## WEDNESDAY POEM

**NIGHT THOUGHTS AT TUNG-LIN MONASTERY ON LU MOUNTAIN**  
BY LI PO (AD701-762). TRANSLATED BY DAVID HINTON

Alone, searching for blue-lotus roots,  
I set out from city gates. Soon, frost  
clear, Tung-lin temple bells call out,  
Hu Creek's moon bright in pale water.  
Heaven's fragrance everywhere pure  
emptiness, heaven's music endless.  
I sit silent. It's still, the entire Buddha-  
realm in a hair's-breadth, mind-depths.  
All bottomless clarity, in which vast  
kalpas begin and end out of nowhere.

This poem comes from David Hinton's translation of  
*The Selected Poems of Li Po*, published by Anvil Press (£9.95)



Charles Darwin, the inspiration for many a Sunday supplement UPP

defined by specific behavioural mechanisms established by genetic adaptation".

With immanent Darwinism, however, "the economy becomes a kind of milieu, barely held together by institutional frameworks, with congeries of Darwinian fictions struggling for advantage". Socialism, he adds, "would be compatible with the evolutionary psychology system", while with immanent Darwinism "there can be no peace for the social engineers". This is an argument that defies any kind of rational response. It's good Sunday-supplement stuff. But is it science?

KERAN MALIK

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# John Ehrlichman

A QUARTER of a century ago, Washington was swept up in an impeachment drama far more gripping than the sorry and sordid saga which has unfolded over the last 12 months. The President of course was Richard Nixon, who was forced to resign. The crime was not the concealment of a legal sexual affair, but high conspiracy, perversion of justice and the misuse of the highest offices and agencies of American government. And a central figure in proceedings was John D. Ehrlichman, Nixon's domestic affairs adviser, confidant and fellow plotter.

Together with Bob Haldeman, the President's chief of staff, he formed what the press dubbed the "Berlin Wall" or "Prussian Guard", sealing off a frequently paranoid President from a world which all three believed was irredeemably biased against them. Ehrlichman had met Haldeman as a student at the University of California after he left the air force in 1945, and the friendship would lead him to the White House.

Their Germanic surnames were matched by the celebrated Teutonic virtues of thoroughness, organisation, loyalty and obedience of orders. They were qualities which made Ehrlichman a formidable manager of Nixon's White House campaigns in 1960 and 1968 (as well as of the ill-fated attempt to win the California governorship in 1962), and later a highly effective bureaucrat. But they proved disastrous in the scandal called Watergate, with which Ehrlichman's name will forever be associated.

Watergate grew directly from the 1972 Nixon re-election campaign, in which the President and his aides would leave no stone, legal or illegal, unturned to win a second term in the White House. Hence the "dirty tricks", and hence the notorious "Plumbers Unit" which re-ported ultimately to Ehrlichman and Haldeman. The seeds of Ehrlichman's downfall were sown as early as March 1969, two months after Nixon took office, when he set

up an in-house "intelligence capability" to provide "investigative support" for the White House.

The plumbers were thus loosed upon the land. Their most infamous deed, which Ehrlichman later described as "the seminal Watergate episode", was the September 1971 break-in at the California office of the psychiatrist of Daniel Ellsberg, who two months earlier had leaked to *The New York Times* the government's secret history of the Vietnam war, known as the "Pentagon Papers". Ehrlichman - whose name in Ger-

*If I had any advice for my kids, it would be never, never, never, to defer your moral judgements to anybody: your parents, your wife, anybody'*

man means "honest man" - had broadly authorised the operation and in 1974 would be tried and convicted for the crime. Before that, however, came Watergate.

Officially the plumbers had been disbanded in early 1972, but in practice they continued to operate - with the most fatal results. On the night of 15 June 1972, five of them were arrested at the Watergate Building in downtown Washington, attempting to place listening devices in the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee. A "third-rate burglary" was about to become America's worst political scandal of the century.

From the outset it was obvious the five were linked to the White House. Soon it would transpire that they were effectively controlled by the splendidly titled "Creep", the Committee to Re-elect the President. As the finger of suspicion pointed ever higher, Nixon was forced on 30 April 1973 to sacrifice his closest aides, requesting the resignation of both Ehrlichman and Haldeman and sacking the White House counsel John Dean. But it was too late. In August 1974 he would be forced to resign himself, after the House of Representatives had voted two articles of impeachment, and his support in the Senate, even among Republicans, collapsed.

By then Ehrlichman was mired in criminal proceedings, and on 1 January 1975 he, Haldeman and the former attorney-general John Mitchell were convicted of conspiracy, perjury and obstruction of justice. Ehrlichman would serve 18 months in gaol. "It is a tragedy," Nixon would later write, "that John Ehrlichman went to prison, while Daniel Ellsberg walked free." In his own 1982 memoir, *Witness to Power*, Ehrlichman himself offered a more downbeat assessment. "I don't miss Richard Nixon very much, and Richard Nixon probably doesn't miss me." But, as the famous Oval Office tapes show, the two were as close as could be in the pursuit and maintenance of power.

The real tragedy perhaps was that, when he was not plotting dastardly deeds, John Ehrlichman could be an admirable government official. Take Theodore White, no Nixon-lover, writing in *The Making of the President* (1972) about Ehrlichman: "His shop was one of the few at the White House where ideas were seriously entertained - good ideas on, land-use policy, on urbanisation and preservation of the American environment." Alas, he will be remembered not for any initiative of domestic policy, but for a couple of phrases which have entered the language of politics the world over:

One was his suggestion to Nixon, caught on the tapes, that Patrick Gray, the hapless acting director of the FBI, be left "twisting slowly, slowly, in the wind". On another occasion he advised Nixon, in measuring the consequences of some initiative, to see "how it plays in Peoria".

Probably Ehrlichman was not so much dishonest, as a man convinced that his supreme duty was to serve the President, whatever it took. He conceded as much in 1977, remarking that he had brought his troubles on himself. "If I had any advice for my kids, it would be never, never, never, to defer your moral

judgements to anybody: your parents, your wife, anybody." After his release from jail, a new Ehrlichman emerged. Disbarred from returning to the law he had practised in Seattle before joining the White House, he remarried and settled in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The flint-faced White House enforcer had turned into a bearded and affable radio commentator and occasional television pundit. He also wrote books, publishing not only *Witness to Power*, but four novels about Washington politics. Finally, he moved to Atlanta where he served as vice-president of Law Interna-

tional, an engineering consultancy specialising in the handling of hazardous waste.

#### RUPERT CORNWELL

*John Daniel Ehrlichman, lawyer, government official and novelist; born Tacoma, Washington, 20 March 1925; counsel to President Richard Nixon 1968-69; Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs 1969-73; married 1949 Jeanne Fisher (three sons, two daughters: marriage dissolved, 1978 Christine McLaurine (one son; marriage dissolved, 1991 Karen Hilliard; died Atlanta, Georgia 14 February 1999.*

before the reforming Labor government of Gough Whitlam took office in Canberra.

His changes embraced not just personal freedoms, but the education system, urban planning and consumer protection. He appointed the first Aborigine, Sir Douglas Nicholls, to the vice-regal office of state governor. And he turned Adelaide into a national centre for the performing arts by building state theatre centre and fostering cultural enterprises. People such as Rudolf Nureyev and Lord Snowdon visited the Adelaide artistic salon revolving around Dunstan and his second wife, Adele Koh.

Dunstan was the first political leader in Australia to understand and use the media as a marketing tool for his own message. When a clairvoyant once predicted that Adelaide would be swamped by a tidal wave, Dunstan went to Glenelg Beach on the appointed day to mix with anxious crowds. He walked through Adelaide streets with a loudspeaker appealing for calm to depositors gathered outside a building society said to be in trouble. He published his own cook book, and talked up the wines from South Australia's now world famous vineyards. At one point, Dunstan's approval rating soared to 83 per cent.

Radio stations played a song called "Our Don Dunstan", fashioned after one about another prominent South Australian, "Our Don Bradman".

How Dunstan brought such a revolution to a society once identi-

fied by its WASPish establishment remains one of the spectacular success stories of Australian politics. The key, perhaps, was his unadorned style. Dunstan could communicate with those less educated and articulate and make them feel included, a rare skill in leaders. Although he was more radical than the party he led, he never forgot, as he told one newspaper, that he had to carry the party with him. Even conservative South Australians admired him in the end, and got swept along in their state's new image. Then it all came unstuck.

In 1978 Dunstan sacked Harold Salisbury, the state police commissioner, after discovering that the police special branch had kept thousands of secret files on public figures. A political storm ensued; a later inquiry vindicated Dunstan's action. But the affair shook his government. Later that year his wife, still in her thirties, died from cancer. Dunstan was deeply distressed, appeared to suffer a breakdown and shocked everyone when he resigned in early 1979, appearing before the media in his dressing gown in hospital. It was a sad exit. Des Corcoran, who took over as leader, called an election later that year at which Labor was decimated. The Dunstan decade was over.

After his health recovered, Dunstan left his beloved South Australia and went to work for the tourist commission in the neighbouring state of Victoria. He publicly supported causes on human and minority rights. After two military coups in Fiji in 1987, he became president of the Movement for Democracy in Fiji. He continued to court controversy, such as when he launched a book on homosexuality on a platform with a man dressed as a nun who called himself Monsignor Porcamadonna. Italian community leaders were furious.

Despite his flamboyance, Dunstan was a reserved, even shy man.

In later years, journalists tried to draw him on his personal life, and the subject of sexuality, but he refused to the last interview, arguing that public figures were entitled to private lives. He returned to Adelaide and opened a restaurant called Don's Table with his partner, Stephen Cheng. Last year, as cancer started to take its toll, he drew a massive 5,000 to the Gough Whitlam Lecture in Adelaide at which he denounced New Labor's embrace of free market economics.

Don Dunstan was an old-style interventionist, and one of his great legacies is the city of Adelaide itself.

He left it with a sense of pride in its

heritage, innovation in the arts and

elegance in the good things of life like

food and drink.

#### ROBERT MILLIKEN

*Donald Allan Dunstan, politician; born Suva, Fiji 21 September 1926; married 1949 Gretel Ellis (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved, 1976 Adele Koh (died 1978; died Adelaide, South Australia 6 February 1999.*

# Billy Houliston

IN THE beautiful late November and early December days of 1953, there was a by-election in the Dumfriesshire constituency. At lunchtime, it was the wont of Labour Party canvassers to repair to Billy's Bar in Dumfries High Street. Our host, "Basher", was a genial, five foot eleven, immensely broad-shouldered man, a veritable Belted Galloway bull, with twinkling kindly eyes, from whom physical power and good nature exuded.

Heaven knows what his politics were, he never let on. But the conversation was not about politics but football and his reminiscences. Our host was Billy "Basher" Houliston, a living legend in those parts, the only man ever to have gained full international caps for Scotland playing for Queen of the South, the venerable, if unfashionable Dumfries football club.

Houliston had been one of my boyhood heroes - and a hero to tens of thousands of other Scottish boys. He was the centre-forward in that pantheon of 1949 Wembley wizards who astonishingly and unexpectedly beat an England team 3-1, where the forward line read Matthews, Mortenson, Milburn, Pearson and Finney, not to mention Frank Swift in goal and the captain Billy Wright.

Houliston more than held his own that day against Neil Franklin of Stoke City, arguably the most commanding centre-half ever to don an England shirt. Like his predecessor, Jock Dodds (Blackpool), Houliston was like a tank, a marvellous asset half a century ago, when balls were leather, heavy and held together by laces. Centre-forwards had to be tough and "Basher", or "Rumble-them-up", as he was known, certainly was.

Houliston's father was a gardener at the Crichton Royal mental hospital, a superb set of red sandstone buildings recently created an outpost of Glasgow University. On leaving Brownhills School, Houliston became a male nurse in the Crichton and first came to notice as the thrusting centre-forward of the hospital eleven.

Whisked away to Arbroath to serve the Second World War in RAF Coastal Command as a gunner operator, Houliston developed his skills with the Arbroath club. On his return home in 1945, he joined his local team, Queen of the South, for whom he was to score 67 goals in 154 First Division appearances.

I first saw him at Tynecastle Park against Hearts, when he quickly became the opponent we loved to hate - a role he relished. My memory of him is at Hampden Park against Ireland in 1949 when he scored twice in a 3-2 victory. His flying header from a cross from Willie Waddell, later manager of Glasgow Rangers, in the tying second period was one of the best goals ever seen at the Glasgow ground.

The highpoint of Houliston's footballing career came on 9 April 1949 at Wembley. Under blue skies and on an exquisite stretch of turf, Scotland, surviving a fearful crisis in the game's opening passages, stormed their way by three goals in one to gain the international championship and inflict on England their first defeat in the tournament since the war. The Association Football correspondent of the Press Association wrote:

When Houliston prepared to take a throw-in down the Scottish left wing the second phase was about to begin. Scotland, now in attack, had been reduced largely to a series of long passes down the right wing, in spite of Houliston's liveliness. Franklin, in command of the ball, was in control and, after 29 minutes, Steel took Houliston's throw, gave Reilly a clever pass behind Aston and there was Mason up to stab the winged square centre beyond Swift on to the far post and into the net.

Alas, while Scotland were touring that summer in the United States, Houliston injured his ankle, and was never the same player again. After spells with Berwick Rangers and Third Lanark he hung up his boots and returned to Dumfries. Lord



## Sir James Hill

SOUTHAMPTON TEST, which James Hill represented for more than 20 years, is one of Britain's super-marginal constituencies. It has changed hands six times since 1955 and has seen even political stars such as Shirley Williams come and leave defeated. Hill, however, was a consistent winner. He was elected in 1970, and hung on until the second Wilson election in 1974. He came back in 1979, however, and held it until the Blair landslide in 1997. For Hill, though, the previous election in 1992 was a close thing. He got back - but by just 55 votes. It was almost the same number as the majority by which he lost the seat in 1974.

If no candidate is worth more than a few hundred votes, then Hill's background provided just the right

number in 1992. Few candidates have had such local ties.

As the son of a Southampton-based merchant navy officer, he was educated at the Regent's Park School in the Test constituency and later at Southampton University. During the Second World War he served in the Royal Fleet Auxiliaries as a signals officer not out of his teens. Later he flew in BOAC flying boats from Southampton to the Solent. He was also a prominent member of Southampton City Council, serving as chairman of the housing committee from 1967 to 1970.

In the Commons he never forgot that he had a marginal seat. His maiden speech was devoted to

Southampton's housing blight and he maintained his reputation as a constituency-oriented MP by attacking on his city's vandals, kerb crawlers and red-light areas. Although he was an instinctive Thatcherite, there was one exception to his robust Thatcherism. He was against any form of privatisation of the Ordnance Survey, a big Southampton employer.

But he was not merely a parish-pump politician. He was a delegate to the European Assembly where he played a significant part on several key committees. Although an early European enthusiast - he addressed 70 meetings during the 1975 referendum campaign - he became gradually more sceptical, announcing in the mid-Eighties: "The Common Agricultural Policy is the root of all the troubles in Europe today."

He was an easily recognisable figure in the House, burly and thick-spectacled, sitting on the front bench below the gangway. He was popular with his colleagues and secretary of their Industry Committee. He served on the select committees on European legislation, transport and procedure and was chairman of the Commons committee on housing improvements. And, as an airman who held pilot's, navigator's and radio officer's licences, he was a natural choice to be secretary of the Parliamentary Flying Club.

In 1997, the year after he was knighted, not even Hill's local roots and long constituency service could save him. He had been undecided

about standing again but in the end he was persuaded to run. He lost by nearly 14,000 votes. At last Test was no longer a marginal. But the result was not due entirely to the Labour landslide. There had been significant boundary changes which had tilted Test decisively towards Labour.

#### TERENCE LANCASTER

*Stanley James Allen Hill, politician; born Southampton 21 December 1926; member, Southampton City Council 1966-70, 1976-79, Chairman of Housing 1967-70, 1976-79; MP (Conservative) for Southampton Test 1970-74, 1979-87; Kt 1996; married 1958 Ruby Ralph (two sons, three daughters); died Southampton 16 February 1999.*

Monro of Langholm, as Sir Hector Monro his MP from 1964 till 1997, remembers him as "a great scoundrel. As owner of both the Nith Hotel at Glencaple and the Embassy Hotel in Dumfries he was immensely popular." He could say that he never played in a losing Scotland side.

#### TAM DALYELL

*William Houliston, nurse, footballer and publican; born Maryhill, Dumfriesshire 4 April 1921; married 1949 Betty Jamieson (two sons); died Dumfries 10 February 1999.*



Southampton ties





## Rumble-them-up'

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William Houliston, nurse, footballer and publican; born Maryhill, Dumfriesshire 4 April 1921; married 1949 Betty Jamieson (two sons); died Dumfries 10 February 1999.

Billy  
Houliston



Pritchard, far right, with the Fortunes. When their hits dried up, 'We were like wet fish on a slab,' he said

OBITUARIES

## OBITUARIES/7

/7

### Barry Pritchard

IN 1963, in Birmingham, the guitarist and vocalist Barry Pritchard formed a group called the Fortunes with Glen Dale and Rod Allen, and they were signed by the eccentric promoter Reg Calvert. Pritchard recalled the first bookings: 'Reg held competitions and, if people shouted a number that we couldn't do, he would pay them half-a-crown. It was no big deal. There might be 20 people shouting out, so Reg would pick out numbers that we knew.'

The Fortunes, as a five-piece with David Carr and Andy Brown, were signed to Decca, and their first single, 'I Love Her Still' (1963), was written by Pritchard. Their second, the songwriter Tony Hiller's infuriatingly catchy 'Caroline' (1964), became the theme music for the pirate radio station Radio Caroline, and was a European hit. The Fortunes stood out from other 1960s beat groups because of their distinctive four-part harmonies. 'Barry Pritchard had the high voice,' says Tony Hiller, 'and he was sensational.'

His high notes really made 'Caroline' work for me.' The Fortunes recorded two numbers for a live album from the Cavern club in Liverpool (1964), but their subsequent singles failed to sell. The record producer Noel Walker remembers: 'The Fortunes' contract came up for renewal and Decca didn't want to renew it. I had recorded them at the Cavern and I told Decca that they sing wonderfully and deserved another chance. I wanted to use them as studio tracks by professional musicians, and I found a beautiful song, "You've Got Your Troubles". The record turned out exactly how I wanted and I regard Barry's harmonies as fundamental to the Fortunes' sound.'

'You've Got Your Troubles' (1965) climbed to No 2 in Britain and No 7 in the United States, but the Fortunes bravely admitted that they had not played their own instruments on the record. As with the Monkees and Love Affair, the public became suspicious of their abilities. However, they played well in concert, where their hit song was

stripped of its middle-of-the-road arrangement. And, as the songwriter Roger Greenaway says, 'There are 160 versions of "You've Got Your Troubles", but the Fortunes' is very much the best.'

Their follow-up single, 'Here It Comes Again' (1965), despite its similarities to 'You've Got Your Troubles', was an international hit, and 'This Gold Ring' (1966) was also successful. Then the hits stopped. Noel Walker recalls: 'Barry was the most outgoing of the Fortunes and was a calming influence when things went wrong. He took the ups and downs much better than the rest.' The Fortunes released some fine singles – 'The Idol' (1967), 'Seasons in the Sun' (1968) and 'Loving Cup' (1969) – but they didn't sell. 'We were like wet fish on a slab,' said Pritchard, 'and it took us some years to get back.'

The comeback finally came with a cover version of Picketywitch's 'That Old Feeling' for the American market. It was followed by 'Here Comes That Rainy Day Feeling Again', which

made the US Top Twenty in 1971. Then came two Top Ten hits in Britain – the reggae-influenced 'Freedom Come Freedom Go' (1971) and 'Storm in a Teacup' (1972, written by Lynsey De Paul).

In 1984 the Fortunes were part of the successful double album *Hooked On Number Ones*, but by then they were relegated to cabaret dates and oldies shows. Pritchard, who was not a large man, had to endure Rod Allen calling him 'a small Fortune' on stage every night.

In 1995, suffering from heart trouble, Pritchard was forced to leave the group. He and his family opened a bar and restaurant on the Costa del Sol.

The Fortunes are about to embark on a nationwide tour with Gerry and the Pacemakers, but Rod Allen is the only remaining original member.

SPENCER LEIGH

Barry Pritchard, singer and guitarist; born Birmingham 3 April 1944; twice married (four sons); died Swindon, Wiltshire 11 January 1999.

### Robert Barr

IN PRAISING Robert Barr's storytelling skills [5 February], Leonard Miall concentrated on his subject's fame as a television-rather than a radio-drama innovator, and creator in part of such huge popular and critical successes as *Z-Cars* (watched at one stage by virtually the entire television-owning population), *Softly Softly*, and the *Spycatcher* series, writes Jack Adrian.

Yet, although Barr defected to the junior medium almost as soon as it re-emerged from wartime cold storage, in 1946, he not only retained an affection for radio, but over the years enjoyed a kind of 'dual nationality', writing profitably for both. Indeed, it may be that he was even more of an innovator than is realised, since although his adapta-

tions from Lt-Col Oreste Pinto's best-selling *Spycatcher* books first appeared on the small screen (1969 to 1971), he quickly rewrote the half-hour plays for the wireless (even retaining the actor Bernard Archard as Pinto), so that *Spycatcher* may well be the very first time a popular television drama series became a radio spin-off.

His successes as a writer for radio may not be burned into the national consciousness to the same extent as, say, *Softly Softly* (the odd surviving episode always good for Sixties' celebration nights on BBC2, or to be used in tandem with earliest lectures on the NFT). But to those who recall the truly great days of radio drama – forget the 1940s or 1950s: the real Golden Age ran roughly from

the mid-1960s through to the mid-1980s – Barr's is a name to cherish.

He wrote at a time when commissioning editors were not bounded by pursed-lipped accountants and a good serial could run for rather more than the miserly four weeks. If you're lucky) accorded it today – his engrossing *And the Walls Came Tumblin' Down* (1968) extended to 13. Yet he could screw up the tension in far less time when necessary: in the six-part *The Dark Island* (1969; murder and espionage amongst the remote islands of the Outer Hebrides) he created one of the most memorable thriller serials ever broadcast (with surely one of the most evocative openings: the cries of the gulls, the keen of a single concertina).

He wrote two sequels, then, in the mid-1970s, a couple of serials featuring his quirky investigator Galbraith (*The King of Diamonds* and *The Midds Touch*). In his seventies, when most writers would be yearning to bury the typewriter under a dust-cover, Barr launched a superb series of tough police dramas. *Detective* ('Stories of crime and detection in London'), starring Ray Brooks as a ducking-and-diving CID sergeant at police-work's sharp end. In the end *Detective* ran to three long series as well as a gripping 10-part serial.

Barr was certainly a brilliant writer for television, but his work for the far more imaginative medium should not be forgotten.

### GAZETTE

#### ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales undertakes engagements in Brighton, East Sussex, Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, attends the Award's Friends' Reception at Buckingham Palace, followed by the Award's annual Charter Member Dinner at St James's Palace. The Princess Royal visits Bakewell, Derbyshire, to view various aspects of the Bakewell Project – a scheme to secure the future of Bakewell through economic, social and business support and training; visits Royal Crown Derby, Derby; as Patron, National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, attends Derby Bureaux's 50th Anniversary Celebration and opens their new premises at Swithland Street, Derby; opens the new factory extension at Thorntons plc, Alfreton, Derbyshire; and visits Green Gables Cheshire Home, Alfreton, Derby.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS are charged at 65p a line (VAT extra).

#### BIRTHDAYS

Mr Yasser Arafat, Chairman, Palestine National Authority, 70; Mr Alan Bates, actor, 65; Dr Julia Brown-Kuschbach, former Editor, *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 104; Mr Bryan Cassidy, MEE, 65; Dr Gordon Cook, Honorary Senior Lecturer in Medicine (Infectious Diseases), University College London, 67; Miss Angela Eagle MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Environment, 38; Miss Maria Eagle MP, 38; The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, 37th Chief of the Name of Bruce, and Lord-Lieutenant of Fife, 75; Lord Foot, solicitor and conservationist, 90; Mr Bernie Grant MP, 55; Lord Hoyle, a Lord in Waiting (Government Whip), 69; Mr Barry Humphries, entertainer, 65; Sir Gordon Jones, former chairman, Yorkshire Water, 72; Mr Richard Kennedy, Head Master, Highgate School, 50; Mr Andrew Leigh, General Manager, the Old Vic, 58; Miss Julia McKenzie, actress and singer, 58; General Sir John Mogg, former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 66; Professor Dr Claire Palley, former Principal, St Anne's College,

Oxford, 68; Mr Gene Pitney, country and western singer and composer, 58; Baroness Rendell of Babergh (Ruth Rendell), crime novelist, 69; Miss Patricia Routledge, actress, 70; Lord Styne of Hadley, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 69; Mr Graham Stringer MP, 49; Commander Mary Talbot, former Director, WRNS, 77; Sir Anthony Wilson, former head of the Government Accountancy Service, 71.

#### ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Sir Edward German (Edward German Jones), composer, 1862; Ronald Arbuthnott, Knox theologian and essayist, 1888. Deaths: Tamerlane the Great, Mongol leader, 1405; Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin), playwright, 1673; Geronimo (Goyathlay) – 'One Who Yawns', Apache chief, 1909; Graham Vivian Sutherland, painter, 1980; Lee Strasberg, actor and founder of the Actors' Studio, 1982. On this day: the inner tomb of Tutankhamun was opened at Luxor by the team led by Lord Carnarvon, 1923; the British National Health Service White Paper was issued, 1944; a majority in the House

#### LECTURES

National Gallery: Rebecca Lyons, 'Ingres (ibid: Ingres's Contemporaries)', 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Gracia Lafuente, 'Contemporary Issues in Photography', 2pm. British Museum: Aileen Donald, '16th-century Porcelain', 11.30am; Robert Gwyrne, 'Sutton Hoo', 12.30pm. Royal Society of Arts, London WC2: Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Jones, 'Air Power in a New Era', 6pm.

#### DINNERS

HMS Victory: Admiral Sir John Brigstocke, Second Sea Lord and Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command, and Lady Brigstocke were the hosts at a dinner held yesterday

evening in HMS Victory, Portsmouth, in aid of the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel Trust.

British Association for the Club of Rome Professor Brian Locke was the host at a dinner held yesterday by the British Association for the Club of Rome at the Athenaeum, London SW1. Dr Hans DuMoulin was the speaker.

Coningsby Club A Coningsby Club dinner was held yesterday evening at the Carlton Club, London SW1. The Hon Francis Maude MP, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, was the guest of honour and speaker.

#### SCHOOLS

Hill House Former pupils and staff of Hill House are invited to a reception on 23 April to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the school's foundation and the 90th birthday of Colonel Townsend. Please write to the Hill House International Junior School, 17 Hans Place, London SW1X 0EP, with your current address and dates at Hill House for full details and an invitation.

### Shareholder could also be employee

#### WEDNESDAY LAW REPORT

17 FEBRUARY 1999

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry v Bottrell

Court of Appeal (Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Mantell) 12 February 1999

WHETHER a controlling shareholder of a company could also be an employee of that company for the purposes of the Employment Rights Act 1996 depended on the circumstances of the particular case.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal of the Department of Trade and Industry against a decision of the Employment Appeal Tribunal that the respondent, who was sole shareholder of a company, was entitled as an employee of the company to a redundancy payment under section 166 of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

The respondent became managing director of the company and held the only issued share. It was intended in the future that an American group would hold 80 per cent of the shares in the company, and a draft shareholders' agreement to that effect had been prepared. The respondent signed a contract of employment.

The company became insolvent before the shareholders' agreement was executed. A receiver was appointed and the respondent was dismissed with effect from April 1996. His application to the DTT for a redundancy payment from the National Insurance Fund under section 166 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 was rejected on the ground that he was not an employee.

He applied to an industrial tribunal which concluded that he was an employee of the company, relying on its findings that his status as sole shareholder was only temporary, and that any control which he had had of the group was only theoretical. The tribunal laid stress

on the facts that the respondent had paid National Insurance contributions and tax as if he were an employee, was entitled to sick pay, worked fixed hours and had a contract with the company which was described as a contract of employment.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal upheld the industrial tribunal's determination, and the DTT appealed, submitting, *inter alia*, in reliance on the decision of the EAT in *Buchan and Ivey v Secretary of State for Employment* [1997] IRLR 80, that whatever his position for other purposes, an individual who held the sole or controlling shareholding in a limited company was not to be regarded as an employee for the purposes of the 1996 Act.

Jennifer Eady (the Treasury Solicitor) for the DTT; Martin Barklem (Shulmans, Leeds) for the respondent.

Lord Woolf MR said that whilst there were attractions in having a simple and clear test which would determine whether a shareholder or a

director was an employee for the purposes of the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Act itself did not provide such a test and it was far from obvious what Parliament would have intended the test to be.

There was no justification for departing from the well-established position in the law of employment generally, which was that whether or not an employer or employee relationship existed could only be decided by having regard to all the relevant facts. If an individual had a controlling shareholding that was certainly a fact which was likely to be significant, but was not to be taken as determinative.

In such a case, a tribunal might wish to consider whether there was or had been a genuine contract between the company and the shareholder, and, if the contract was not a sham, whether the contract actually gave rise to an employer/employee relationship; whether there were other directors apart from the shareholder employee, and whether the company's constitution gave the shareholder rights such that he was in reality answerable only to himself and incapable of being dismissed; and whether, if he was a director, he was able under the Articles of Association to vote on matters in which he was personally interested, such as the termination of his contract of employment.

In the present case the industrial tribunal had been entitled to conclude that there was a genuine contractual relationship between the respondent and his company.

KATE O'HANLON  
Barrister

#### WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE  
bae-off, adj.

Bake-off (not in the OED) is a bogus process, akin to those pubs which proclaim home-made food but merely heat it up. Carr's intestines are girding themselves: McCain's bae-off "will set an industry standard over the next few years, they give a home-delivery or pizza-parlour standard".

# You ask the questions

(Such as: Gerry Adams, was your decision to join the peace process strategic or moral?)

**G**erry Adams, 50, has been president of Sinn Fein since 1983. In 1971 he was interned for suspected terrorist activity. He is now MP for Belfast West, and was an active negotiator for Sinn Fein during the forging of the Good Friday agreement.

**Who has been the greatest influence on your life?**  
**Cecile Stewart, Chippenham**  
There have been so many people... my parents, my grandmother, Colette, Christ, Mairead Farrell, Bobby Sands and many more. It would be wrong to single out a particular individual.

**Do you see an end to the punishment headings?**  
**Helena Jack, Edinburgh**  
Yes. They should stop immediately. We also need a new policing service and criminal justice system, as well as the involvement of the community.

Until the Police Commission has reported and until we have a proper policing service, we still need to tackle in a non-violent, legal but effective way the problem of antisocial and criminal behaviour. Some elements have sought selfishly to exploit the existing gap in the justice system. One response to this in the last two years has been the formation of a number of community/neighbourhood watch groups. They have significantly improved the quality of life of people living in areas of Belfast like Twinbrook and Poleglass and the Whiterock.

Nor is the problem resolved by vigilanism or by battering young people, some of whom are unfairly categorised as "hoods". The notion of restorative justice is required, in which the community plays a proactive role in reforming and rehabilitating criminals. The community must agree the principles underlying any restorative justice programme.

**What is your opinion of Michael Collins: hero or traitor?**

**Steve Holloway, Nottingham**  
I don't see people in that context. Everyone has to be judged in their own time, and while I believe that Collins should not have accepted the treaty in the way he did, there were many, many other leaders involved. His death during the Irish civil war was tragic proof of the efficacy of the tactic of divide and conquer which has underwritten Britain's involvement in Ireland.

**Have you ever thought of packing it in, and going to live in America and earning a fortune?**

**Student, University of Ulster**  
I have never thought of going to live in America, though I would like to visit there and many other places in a more leisurely and more casual – anonymous – way. Nor have I thought of earning a fortune. But I have thought of packing it in...

I live in Warrington and I'm of Northern Irish Catholic descent. I was in Warrington with my young son on the morning of the bomb attack. My relatives in Northern Ireland and myself were deeply affected by the event. Do you think that it was a catalyst in the rapid progress of the peace agreement in the aftermath?

**Thomas Conlon, Warrington, Cheshire**  
The killing of Jonathan Ball and Tim Parry in Warrington, though it was clearly a mistake, was wrong. I know I was deeply moved by the death of the two boys. It is difficult to know exactly how much of a catalyst this particular incident was, because unfortunately there have been many such tragic incidents involving young people killed by either the IRA, the loyalists or the British Crown forces.

The families of the two boys killed at Warrington, like many of the other families of victims, behave with great dignity and courage. I like to think that all of these killings are an incentive for those of us who



are committed to building a lasting peace settlement. Unfortunately, and regrettably, the horror of these incidents appears to be forgotten or ignored by some elements. For example – despite the cruelty of last summer, when three little Catholic boys were burned to death in Ballymoney at the height of the Orange marching season – the siege of Garvaghy Road has continued unabated. And the awfulness of the Omagh bomb seems now to have been forgotten by some elements.

What we all need to do, and this includes the British and the Irish governments, is to ensure that the peace process works, that not a single other person is killed, and that a lasting peace is established.

**Which historical figure do you admire most?**

**John Lister, Cornwall**  
On a global scale, I am a huge admirer of Nelson Mandela. And in my own life, I like to think that history is made by little people who rarely get mentioned in the history books, but who day in and day out make their own history. In this phase of Irish history, I meet such people every day and they are generally good-humoured, dignified and unassuming as they go about the task of creating a new society. I have huge admiration for these people. Interestingly enough, I find at a community level that most of the most radical and modest activists are women.

**Was your decision to join the peace process strategic or moral?**

**Anne Sheehan**  
There is a moral imperative to find an alternative to conflict. Irish republicans have always recognised this and Sinn Fein's involvement in the search for a peace strategy sprang from that necessity.

Sinn Fein wants to demolish the physical, psychological and political barriers which divide the people of this island. These owe much to the legacy of our past

and continued British jurisdiction in Ireland, as well as to partition.

The peace process is about tearing down these barriers. It is about creating a new dispensation on this island in the new millennium which raises our common humanity above the prejudices and divisions of our past.

Sinn Fein's political objective is a united Ireland free of British interference. Everything we do is intended to advance that entirely legitimate and realisable goal. We see a 32-county republic as the best way to eradicate the range of political, social, economic and other inequalities which affect the people of this island.

**Have you lost friends and relatives in the troubles?**

**Margaret Collins, Peterborough, London**

Yes. There have been over 20 members of Sinn Fein killed, and another similar number of family members, many of them personally known to me. My brother-in-law, Patrick Mulvenna, was shot dead by the British Army in 1973. My cousin

Kieran Murphy was mutilated and killed by the Shankill butchers, and in January or last year my nephew-in-law Terry Enright, a young man with two infant children, was killed by loyalists in the killing spree around Christmas. My brother was very seriously injured when shot by the British Army and I also was wounded when a loyalist death squad shot me. Numerous friends have been victims of loyalists and British forces. In my constituency of West Belfast hundreds of people have been killed.

**What are women's issues do you support? And which do you oppose?**

**Jane Clark, London**

Equality. In Ireland women are discriminated against in every facet of our society – an experience common throughout the world. It is wrong. It is an intolerable situation and one which must be challenged at every opportunity and changed. Equality is a basic human right and it must be applied and defended.

The issue of what is described as a woman's "right to choose" is an important matter with serious implications for Ireland. Every year in Ireland at least 5,000 Irish women travel to Britain for abortions. While not supportive of abortion on demand, our party policy on this issue recognises a range of social and medical circumstances which can give rise to women having abortions, such as where a woman's mental and physical well-being of life is at risk, or in grave danger.

**What books and political events have had the greatest influence on you?**

**Patrick Fox, Basingstoke, Hants**  
I suppose the writings of Alice Walker had a big influence on me in terms of feminism, and *Labour in Irish History* by James Connolly, which is a socialist republican analysis of our history.

On the international stage, the achievement of democracy in South Africa, the re-

unification of Germany, and the collapse of the USSR, are surely indications that no situation is intractable and that everything is possible.

Locally, in my teens in 1964 when the RUC, at the behest of Ian Paisley, smashed into a Sinn Fein election office on the Falls Road and seized the Irish national flag which was displayed there. This event kick-started my sense of political consciousness. Five years later, the pogroms in Belfast which were the reaction to the civil rights struggle here. The seminal event for all republicans of my generation were the hunger strikes of 1980 and 1981 in which 10 prisoners died.

**Is the Good Friday agreement more at risk now than it has ever been?**

**Anon**

The onus for delivering and implementing the agreement during this period will be very much on the British Government. The success of the agreement will depend upon Britain establishing the agreed structures so that power can be transferred from London and Dublin within the time-frame outlined, by 10 March. If they fail to do this, which I think most unlikely, then the Unionist veto will have prevailed and the wrekkers and re-junctionists will have won.

We must not allow this to happen. The Good Friday agreement is what we have. It represents what is possible at this time; not the preferred option of any of the participants – certainly not Sinn Fein's.

**Who is your favourite comedian?**

**Adrian O'Grady, Ulster**  
I enjoy John Cleese very much. Patrick Kelly can be funny the odd time. The Hole in the Wall Gang aren't bad. On reflection I probably prefer comedies to comedians.

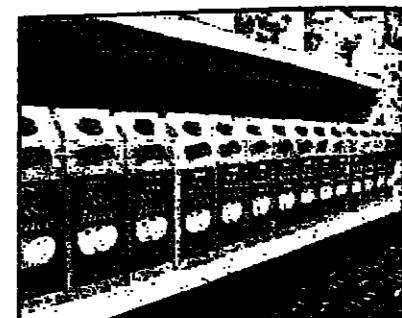
**Can you describe yourself in two sentences?**

**Judith Mahoney, Strabane**  
Yes. Tall, bearded and bespectacled.

## THE IRRITATIONS OF MODERN LIFE

### 30. SUPERMARKETS

BY BRUCE MILLAR



I AM at the supermarket. The word "yoghurt" is scrawled on the torn envelope in my hand, so I steer the trolley towards the dairy aisle, a 30-ft expanse of milk-based products. Mission accomplished.

Er no. There's peach-flavoured yoghurt, strawberry-flavoured yoghurt with peach or strawberry chunks, yoghurt with forest berries (I've never seen berries in a forest), vanilla-flavoured yoghurt, chocolate-flavoured yoghurt, Greek-style with honey, creamy yoghurt with blobs of fruit puree in a separate compartment.

There's low-fat yoghurt and no-fat yoghurt, or rather – since spellings have to vary as much as the contents – no-fat or lite. And just in case you think you've got a handle on the choices involved, there's crème fraîche and fromage blanc.

Out of my depth in dairy, I decide to go for the ordinary, unflavoured, unfiltered, unmedicated, full-fat, plain variety. And I can't find it.

Perhaps I should retrace my steps and try to remember why I wanted yoghurt in the first place? Was it for pudding or salad?

If, by some failure of weekend programming, my family and I were to find ourselves at the supermarket together, my interior monologue on the merits and uses of various yoghurts would turn into a public debate that would inevitably end in one of those domestic compromises that leave each party feeling sour – and we end up leaving the shop with half a dozen different types and flavours of yoghurt in our trolley.

Without the interested parties present to debate their particular tastes, my nerve wavered. But I did not sink so low as to phone home on the mobile, as I see my fellow shoppers doing from time to time, and describe the display in front of me.

The whole point of the supermarket run is to shop quickly and efficiently and maybe even inexpensively under one roof.

The whole point of choice, on the other hand, is that it requires decision-making – a demanding and time-consuming process.

So the abundance of choice in our supermarkets – every year bigger, better, more – has transformed the business of stocking up on household staples into a day's work, involving detailed analysis of pros and cons and whys and wherefores.

The next item on my envelope is washing powder. The aisle is another expanse of different brands in different sizes and different packages and boxes. One declares itself to be "biological". What can it mean? Is it intended to sound healthy and natural?

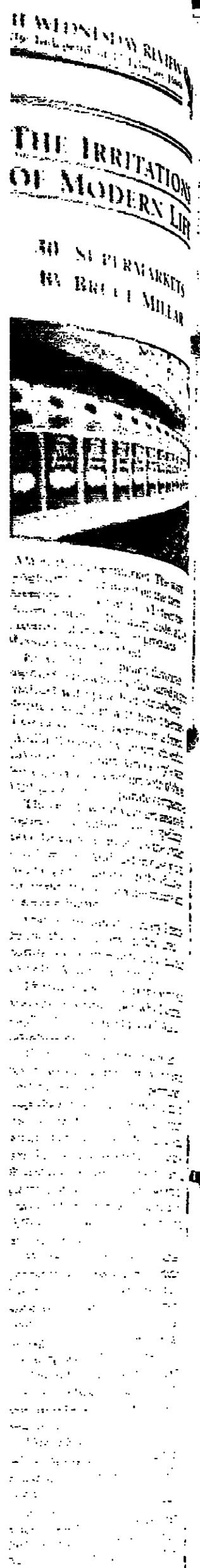
The next box is equally proud of being "non-biological". I can have a soft pack. A cardboard box. A plastic container. A dispensing ball. A measuring cup. I could have a refill (what would I be refilling?). There are different flavours. I could, if I chose, walk around in lemon-scented jockey shorts, or sleep in pine-scented sheets. And how do I choose?

At this point I do what any rational person would, dazzled by infinite variety. I start loading the trolley at random. Then, dimly aware that I've departed from my crumpled list, I dump a couple of yoghurts (no-fat banana flavour with honeycomb; Greek full fat with muesli) on the dog-food shelf. More choice for dogs.

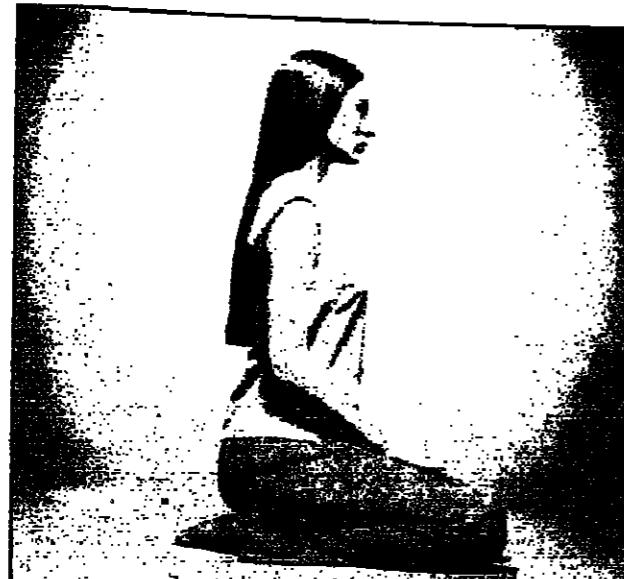
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Have no fear: neon pink, turquoise and lapis lazuli blue are here. But are you ready for acid yellow? By Susannah Frankel



Lime shell top, £148; red linen trousers, £185; by Sportmax; at MaxMara, 32 Sloane Street, London SW1; and Matches, 35a South Park Road, London SW1 (enquiries 0171-287 3434)



Double-layer, neon-pink dress, £50, by Warehouse; branches at 19-21 Argyll Street, London W1; 30 King Street, Manchester; 14 Lands Lane, Leeds (enquiries 0171-278 3491)



Lemon top, £14.99, from Hennes (enquiries 0171-255 2031); aqua top, £27.99, by Morgan (0171-383 2888); lemon asymmetric skirt, to order, by Etro (0171-495 5767)



Orange linen drawstring dress, £85, by French Connection; 249 Regent Street, London W1; 16 Market Hill, Cambridge; 45 Princes Square, Glasgow; and stores nationwide (enquiries 0171-399 7200); purple cashmere cardigan, £148, by Jigsaw; 126-127 New Bond Street, London W1; 10 Pelham Street, Nottingham; 42 Grafton Street, Dublin; and stores nationwide (enquiries 0171-491 4484)

## I've had it up to here with grey

**T**here are certain received wisdoms: stripes on the horizontal should only ever be worn by the enviably thin; American Tan tights and puffball skirts are a crime of fashion of unprecedented proportions, and pink is likely to do nothing whatsoever for the average grey/white British complexion. In fact, it may be positively harmful.

You know something's afoot, however, when Helmut Lang - let's just call him Mr Minimal Monochrome - turns to colour. You know something's afoot, plain insens when that colour is pink - not palest rose,

you understand, more like neon.

Things gather momentum when Tom Ford - a man who, until recently has taken pride in the fact that he wears black and only black, morning, noon and night and whatever the weather - features equally vibrant pinks, alongside turquoise and blue, on the normally resolutely sombre Gucci catwalk. Put it this way: until now, for Ford, white has been a radical option. In terms of colour, this time round, his is the Almodovar of collections: hot and Mediterranean from start to finish.

But then, as Ford himself puts it, when asked to explain this rather radical about-turn: "I always try to think of myself as the customer. So,

what does she want? She certainly doesn't want grey. Her closet's full of it. She's read about it 20 million times. She's sick of it. She's lived through grey. She's gone through minimalism and conceptual fashion. So, what does she want now? She wants... pink dresses." Of course!

If the spring/summer collections are anything to go by - and the autumn/winter shows, kicking off this week in New York, seem only to add grist to the mill - the world, in fashion terms at least, is set to become a far more colourful place. Lang and Ford aren't the only designers to have come over all bright and breezy: everyone from Calvin Klein and Donna Karan to Christian Dior

and Clements Ribeiro has introduced a hefty dose of colour into their collections. Lang's and Ford's offerings are the most significant, however. Between them, they are almost singlehandedly responsible for informing the Great British High Street: where forthcoming trends are concerned, these are the world's two most influential designers.

So, it seems that, this time round, the customer really might want pink dresses. And blue ones. Even yellow ones, although this potentially most virulent of hues, it almost goes without saying, should be handled with even more care than the first. We can only be thankful that lime green isn't back on the fashion

agenda. Remember lime green?

Of course, each and every summer, fashion editors push colour as if their very existence depended on it - it makes great pictures, after all - and then turn up at the next round of shows wearing black head to toe. This season, however, there's barely any black in the stores to be seen. Grey, meanwhile, is just so last season (and the season before that), and the one before that, it doesn't bear thinking about. For spring/summer, colour - from palest aqua to brightest turquoise, from dusty lilac to purled pink; from delicate primrose to acid yellow and from lapis lazuli to ice blue - takes centre stage.

For those still committed to more

neutral shades, bright isn't necessarily best: a very pale skin should avoid the strongest shades. Neither should they worry about mixing their colours: the truly brave (truly fashionable) among us should think nothing of combining orange with purple, say, or yellow with blue. Have courage in your convictions and don't ever care.

And finally, there's always white to resort to, which, more than any rainbow shade, is the new black. Fashion purists might do well to stick with this. They can always accessorise with colour rather than go the whole hog. There's many a tomato red lipstick or neon pink handbag out there to choose from after all.

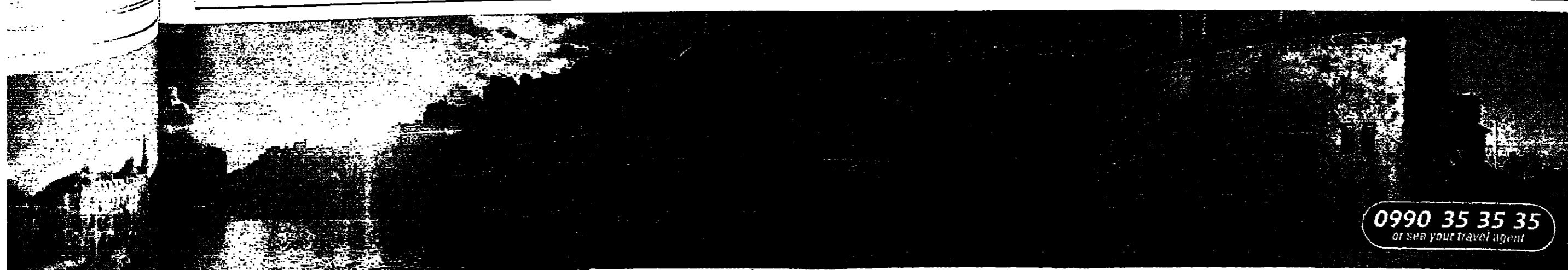
### NEXT WEEK

*Is New York the new London? Can the commercial fashion capital ever compete with London as a centre for innovation and ideas? Full New York report, including Calvin Klein, Donna Karan, Marc Jacobs, TSE Cashmere and more*

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# Art, travel and other drugs

The extraordinary life and work of Henri Michaux remain profoundly influential abroad. Why not here? By Kevin Jackson

**T**he year 1928 was a busy one for the poet Henri Michaux. He wrote to his friend Jean Paulhan about various books and shorter writings he had in hand, as well as his involvement with music, drama, theatre, painting and sculpture, and his fascination with the Tibetan sage and sorcerer Milarepa. Meanwhile, though his health was far from robust, Michaux was keeping himself out of mischief by spending several months canoeing along a tributary of the Amazon for a thousand or so miles, and climbing mountains and volcanoes in the Andes.

"I brutalised myself," he wrote. "I forced myself to walk, but my body stood up poorly to these adventures."

When not pushing his frail constitution to its limits exploring the outer world, he applied himself just as recklessly to the murkier recesses of his inner world, dosing himself with ether and opium. He was, in short, no Philip Larkin.

In fact, it's hard to think of any Anglophone writer or artist with whom Michaux might reasonably be compared, though some have made the attempt. Richard Ellmann, who translated a selection of his writings in the early Fifties, found affinities between Michaux and Jonathan Swift, since both were inventors of imaginary lands and were moved to savage indignation by human cruelty and idiocy. (Less plausibly, Ellmann thought he saw a certain likeness of Michaux in the American writer and cartoonist James Thurber.)

You might also say that Michaux is a little like Aldous Huxley, since both were mystics who wrote at length about their experiences with mescaline; a little like Sir Richard Burton, since he was a pioneering and stoical traveller with a keen interest in matters anthropological; and a little like William Blake, since Michaux, too, expressed himself as urgently in paint as he did in writing.

And then, having drawn such analogies, you finally throw in the towel, since there remains so much in Michaux's vast oeuvre of books and paintings which has any true counterpart in our culture; a very good reason, then, for our starting to pay more attention to him. A hundred years after his birth in Belgium, Henri Eugene Marie Ghislain Michaux (1899-1984) is regarded by the French-speaking world as an inescapable, magisterial presence in both visual art and literature, and by the English-speaking world as... well, it is tricky to complete that phrase.

Despite the best efforts of, *inter alia*, Professor Ellmann, the Tate Gallery (which showed a decent number of Michaux's paintings alongside Picasso and Giacometti in its "Paris Post War" exhibition a few years ago) and Bladex Books (which recently published a translation of Michaux's late book *Déplacements, Déplacements as Space, Displaced*), Michaux remains pretty much unknown in Britain, even to the least parochial souls. A few weeks ago, I launched into an animated discussion about Michaux with a particularly cultivated European publisher, only to find myself at hopeless cross-purposes – until it dawned on me that he assumed I must be talking about the novelist and politician André Malraux.

This week, it falls to London's Whitechapel Gallery to make another attempt at importing this unclassifiable *maître*. On Friday, the Whitechapel will be opening the first one-man show of Michaux's work to be held in the United Kingdom. This will include some 130 works, displayed in three sections. The first

than the human hand would not be up to the task of following the speeding course of the inexhaustible spectacle."

On the other, he was scornful of what might be called the tabloid response to his work: "To the amateurs of one-way perspectives who might be tempted to judge all my writings as the work of a junkie, let me say – sorry, but I am more the water-drinking type."

Oddly, this self-portrait was quite accurate. As far as we can make out from reminiscences and confessions, Michaux was rather a grim, ascetic character; and was one of the very few writers (another would be Ernst Jünger) of whom it could accurately be said, in the antiseptic cliché, that he "experimented with drugs", as opposed to getting gleefully or wretchedly zonked on them. He hated being photographed, but the handful of shots which exist – generally by the likes of Brassai, and very fine – show the stern reserve and forcefulness of a man who might in another life have been a cardinal, a general or a hanging judge.

Michaux strikes us, that is to say, as an intensely serious man, driven as much by a strange sense of self-invented duty as by a deep unhappiness that stemmed from his childhood, which was solitary, stubborn, and blighted by a condition we would now call anorexia. His wanderings in Europe, North Africa, South America, India, China and Japan (some of them the inspiration for his most celebrated travel book, *Un barbare en Asie A Barbarian in Asia* (1933), appear less like youthful adventurousness than the type of pathological restlessness anatomised by Bruce Chatwin in *The Songlines* and elsewhere. And there's evidence to suggest that Michaux turned to writing and painting as others might turn to a therapist, which may be why his most productive periods were during private agonies. Asked, in 1942, to explain his reasons for writing, he said that his principal motive was "to free myself from an intolerable tension."

Michaux began painting as early as the Twenties, but did not really become known as a painter until, in 1938, *Un poète se change en peintre*, announced the poster for his show at the Galerie Pierre. He began to be taken seriously only in 1948, after an outburst of creativity immediately following the death of his wife Marie-Louise that February. (She had been in hospital for two months after suffering from terrible burns when her nylon *peignoir* caught fire.)

In his grief, Michaux poured out hundreds upon hundreds of watercolours in the space of little more than a month. By April,

*In another life he might have been a cardinal, a general or a hanging judge*

two are "Calligraphy" – work done mainly in Indian ink, representing the uncertain borderland between words as lexical units and words as visual patterns – and "Watercolours," including both abstract and figurative paintings, especially of faces. "It's not in the mirror that one should contemplate oneself," runs one of his maxims. "Men, look at yourselves on paper."

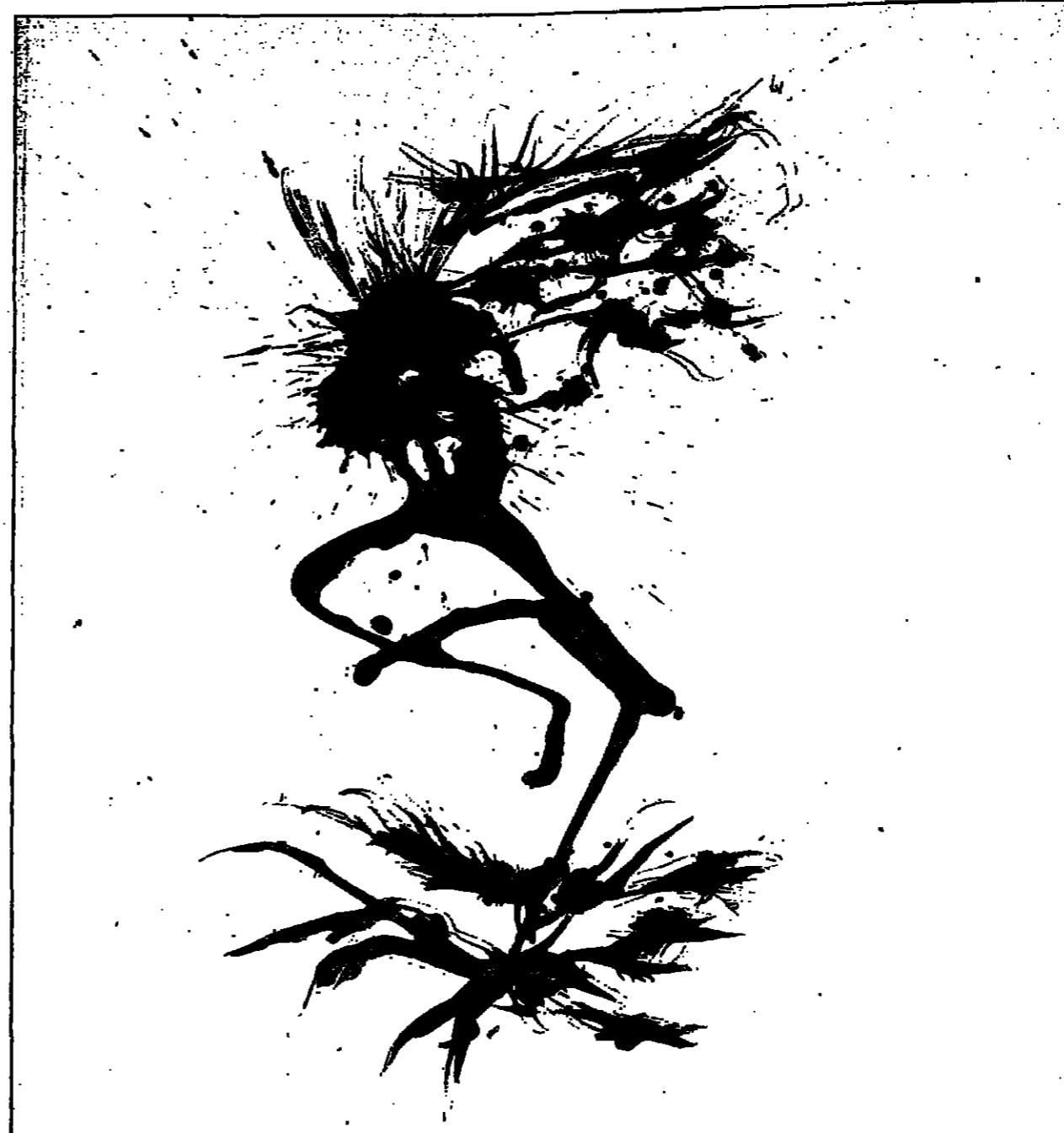
The third section is entitled "Mascalin," and contains 63 of his agitated, weirdly affecting graphic records of the hours he spent on that drug as well as on LSD-25 and other hallucinogens, with his doors of perception well ajar. These unearthly visions, in conjunction with the four books he wrote about his drug experiences, *Misérable Miracle* (1956), *L'irrigé Turbulent* (1957), *Connaisance par les Gouffres* (1961), and *Les Grandes Epreuves de l'Esprit* (1966) (only the first is available in English), earned him notoriety as well as admiration.

His response was partly defiant, partly defiant. On the one hand, he was chastened by the gap between vision and expression: "The present drawings are, need I say? Reconstructions. A hand 200 times more agile

than the human hand would not be up to the task of following the speeding course of the inexhaustible spectacle."

On the other, he was scornful of what might be called the tabloid response to his work: "To the amateurs of one-way perspectives who might be tempted to judge all my writings as the work of a junkie, let me say – sorry, but I am more the water-drinking type."

Michaux began painting as early as the



"Untitled" (1953) by Henri Michaux, Indian ink on paper

some of these were on show at the Galerie René Drouin. The critics were enraptured, and Michaux's reputation as both writer and artist was assured.

André Gide, a fervent supporter of Michaux's work, summed up its distinctive quality by saying that "He excels in making us feel intuitively both the strangeness of natural things and the naturalness of strange things." It's a catchy slogan, and

not a bad thought to bring to Michaux's work. But there are even better thoughts to take away from his work. Knowing himself how wonderful it was to be liberated by the example of a writer such as Laurence Sterne or artists such as Paul Klee and Max Ernst, he hoped to serve as a liberator for artists still unborn, as he wrote in the "Postface" to *Mouvements* (1951):

"Whoever, having perused my signs, is led by my example to create signs himself according to his being and his needs will,

unless I am very much mistaken, discover a source of exhilaration, a release such as he has never known, a disencrustation, a new life open to him, a writing unforced for affording relief, in which he will be able at last to express himself far from words, words, the words of others."

"Henri Michaux: Works on Paper" is at the Whitechapel Gallery, Tue-Sun, 19 Feb-25 April (0171-522 7878). Admission free

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## Power and imagination

### THE RUSSIAN-BORN pianist Arcadi Volodos is a man of few words, as more than one interview has made plain. Perhaps this laconic charmer failed to communicate clearly with the organisers of the South Bank piano series about his intended changes of programme on Sunday, for after a misleading announcement we were left – literally – in the dark.

Volodos is, however, a pianist of many notes and prodigious feats of virtuosity, which by the time of his fourth encore began to seem too much of a good thing, as he hovered up and down the keyboard gobbling up more complications than the brain could untangle.

Yet there is more to him than a note-spinning machine. He has, for a start, a wonderful

liberation from the page as it is possible to imagine.

Volodos looks like a bouncer – not someone you'd mess with – but his massive weight is held in reserve as he toys with technical challenges with an imperturbable confidence. He began to reveal his full prowess in a group of preludes and Etudes-tableaux by Rachmaninov, first uncovering his magnificent tone at its fullest in the C sharp minor Etude from the first set, revelling in the effortless velocity of his octaves and double notes in the D major Etude from the second.

Finally, what prompted all those encores was a mind-numbing athletic display in the Horowitz version of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No 15. There's no point in playing it unless like this – with a supercharged pugilism that seemed to cost this keyboard heavyweight little effort. He vanquished hardly the ghost of a smile the whole evening.

ADRIAN JACK

## Young guns go for it

### VISUAL ARTS

ACCELERATOR  
ARNOLFINI GALLERY  
BRISTOL

IT HAPPENS time and time again. A curator comes up with a great zeitgeist theme, the show is cast, a hip designer is contracted to do the catalogue and a substantial buzz is generated. Then the artists go and muck it all up by insisting on being artists and doing what they like. In this case, however, any discrepancy between the curators' intentions and the artists' response has had an enriching effect. There may not be much interrogation of the theme – fashion and "popular" culture – but the range of the work is impressive. There's even some good painting.

Co-curated by Southampton City Art Gallery (where it first appeared at the end of last year), Arnolfini and Oldham Art Gallery, Accelerator is an international group show by 12 relatively young artists. The buzz starts in the foyer of the gallery, where Jeremy Deller – the artist who once made a T-



A detail from Kilimnik's 'artless' DiCaprio portrait

shirt out of a tabloid headline reading "Robbie Williams: My Drug Hell", which was then worn by the singer in a notable act of appropriation – has fashioned an audio-tape loop of a ticket tout's ever more desperate imprecations. Once inside, your ears are assailed by the rave music soundtrack of Hilary Lloyd's video installation where, on two screens, a DJ can be seen in the contrasting settings of a club and his bedroom. Neither incarnation – spinning records or smoking fags – offers much textual analysis or aes-

thetic pleasure. Lloyd's other piece, a slide show of club queen's progress through the night, also displays a studied blankness that fails to move the exhibition beyond a self-deprecating "Yeah, right" response.

The painters, by contrast, display a superficially uncritical delight in the visual language of advertising and promotion that recalls the work of Pop artists from the Sixties. Michael Bevilacqua paints collages of band logos and teen icons with an ice-cream palette, while Suzy Spence

PHIL JOHNSON  
Arnolfini, Bristol (0117-929 9191) then Oldham Art Gallery (0161-911 4657)

illy  
liston

Kinky sexual experiments were being shown on stage long before *Shopping and Fucking*. Marivaux played dangerous gender games in his 1744 play *La Dispute*. It's a natural for director Neil Bartlett. By Paul Taylor

## Legends of the Fall

**D**id Adam have a navel? Just for decoration, of course, and for solidarity with his offspring. Or was it one of the meagre consolations of post-Edenic life that at least he didn't have any problems with smelly, wedged-in fluff? How though, could you be the human race's Ur-navelgazer without a navel to gaze into? Tricky.

We have a powerful urge to try to imagine a primal, prelapsarian state, but as the above parody shows, the fun and difficulties of this activity arise from the fact that we only have postlapsarian methods and metaphors for engaging in it. Even imagination is a "fallen" phenomenon. In *Paradise Illustrated*, his acutely witty descendants on themes from *Paradise Lost*, D J Enright pinned it down perfectly with this vignette: "It's unimaginable," sighed Adam. "You're not obliged to imagine it," snapped the Landlord. "Yet."

People have gone to extraordinary lengths in the unborn hope of artificially reproducing "original" conditions. There's the instance of the Pharaoh, cited by Herodotus, who caused some children to be reared in total silence in the barny belief that when they eventually spoke, it would be in the primal language of humanity. And tragically, in our century, there's the case of Genie, the Los Angeles teenage girl who spent her entire life locked up. Her still-preverbal plight had linguists salivating: through her, they thought, Chomsky's theories about language and the mind could be proved or disproved. Not so, and the poor girl became a shuttlecock in a contest between rival academics.

No non-fictional experiment has, however, displayed quite the kinkiness and exquisite cruelty of that dramatised by Pierre Marivaux in his 1744 play *The Dispute*. This compelling rarity is about to be revived by Neil Bartlett, artistic director of the Lyric, Hammersmith, using his own translation and in a welcome co-production between the Lyric and the RSC. The set-up in this frightening comedy is as follows: 18 years before the action commences, a cherché dispute had arisen at the Prince's court over which of the sexes in the early days of mankind committed the first infidelity. To "settle" the matter, the Prince promptly ordered four babies to be reared in solitary confinement. Compared with them, marionet *Miranda* in Shakespeare's cognate *Tempest* had a crammed social diary. And the young heir to the throne who is continually drugged and swept backwards and forwards from ragged isolation to glittering court in the political unrest of Calderon's masterpiece *Life Is A Dream* enjoyed, by comparison, a life crowded with incident and friendship.

The drama of what happens when Marivaux's young people are eventually released into each other's company is enclosed within a singularly nasty frame. Watching the proceedings unnoticed are the prince's son and Hermione, the woman he wishes to seduce. The outcome of the inset drama will evidently affect their relationship for good or ill. What exactly,



A frightening comedy in a nasty frame: Neil Bartlett directs Marivaux's *The Dispute*

Geraint Lewis

though, are they observing? A re-enactment of Eden and the Fall, or – notwithstanding the calendar age of these couples – a kind of child pornography?

Neil Bartlett teams with fascinating ideas about the piece, which he likens, in its Rococo exquisiteness, to a Meissen figure – its style telling tension with the clinical brutality it confronts and analyses. It felt a bit incongruous to be talking to Bartlett, an urban gay man *par excellence*, in his bijou cottage digs in Stratford-upon-Avon, rather as though one had suddenly spotted Genet in a National Trust gift shop. He appears, however, to be relishing his temporary transposition and certainly productions such as this are just the kind of blood transfusion the RSC needs.

A Slovakian company brought an extraordinarily sexy version of *The Dispute* to the 1991 Edinburgh Festival; but the revival now used as a touchstone which firmly shifted proceedings to a post-Sadean, post-Freudian environment where the Nazi experiments in the death camps never seemed far away and where one of the young guinea pigs was reduced, to sui-

cide. Bartlett's staging sounds much subtler. Setting the play at an aristocratic country house weekend in the 1930s will enable him to get the best of both worlds.

In his view, what befalls the 18-year-old in the short course of the play is "an evolution that is like time-lapse photography. They start off being five, but actually behave as if they are three, and finish older than us". For Bartlett, the timescale of the play easily incorporates an acceleration into the future. "It seems to start in the Rococo 18th century and whether it wants to or not, it winds up in a Sadian wasteland". He is struck by how acutely the play anticipates later "findings". The comically naive routines with a looking glass "are almost a canonical description of Freud's mirror-phase and its perils". Having a foot, so to speak, in two temporal camps, the production will strive to heighten the play's prophetic cultural ambivalence.

I suggested to Bartlett that theatre is a medium particularly suited to dramatising these doomed attempts to recreate origins, the bare stage a symbol of the *tabula rasa*, the slate wiped clean, a metaphor right under the actors' feet. He qualifies this

sight by saying that in *The Dispute*, there's a strange doubleness in the setting. The stage has to represent both the abstract base I've described and the very specific location of a contrived wilderness in the grounds of a country estate. Hence, the corner of a building from the Charlottenburg Gardens in Berlin featuring in the set.

Those of us who feel that a more interesting question than "which sex committed the first infidelity?" would be "which sex first thought of such a mean, futile question?", will be relieved to learn that that dispute is only the ostensible contention in Marivaux's play. What is most profoundly at issue, declares Bartlett, "are the two competing mythologies of childhood. Does every childhood inevitably re-enact the Fall? Or is evil the failure of parents?

In her book about Mary Bell, Gita Sereny slips in a shocking statement. She talks about "the intrinsic goodness of the human being as born. But what about Mary Bell's mother? She must also have been naturally good. So where does the chain end? That's the book's great silence."

The perverted ingenuity of the experimental set-up in *The Dispute* extends to

the skin colour of the couple assigned to rear the children. Carise and Mearou are black, the Prince reports, "so that their charges might be the more astonished when they see other people" – to maximise, in other words, their sense of disorientation on realising that their whiteness is not unique to them. At this point, the antennae of Bartlett, the creative historian of theatrical culture, twitch. "What wouldn't we give to know," he muses. "If Carise and Mearou were played by black actors at the original performance? And wouldn't it be fabulous to commission a play about the life of the two black performers in *The Dispute* after the curtain comes down?"

Frames-within-frames: a contrast between the power politics in the play and in the theatrical company. Somehow I fancy you won't have to wait many years for this intriguing hypothetical project. Most likely venue? The Lyric, Hammersmith. Most likely author? One Neil Bartlett.

*The Dispute* previews at The Other Place, Stratford, from 24 Feb. (01789-295623) tours to Poole and Brighton, Lyric Hammersmith, from 15 Apr (0181-741 2311) To 6 Mar (0171-565 5000)

## Jam on, jam on

REVIEW  
TOAST  
ROYAL COURT  
LONDON

CASTING AROUND for a title for his delightfully funny play set in a mass production bakery in Hull in the Seventies, Richard Bean has clearly been up against it. Carla Lane had already used up Bread. Watching Richard Wilson's beautifully acted and observed production, I kept wondering why *Dough or The Bread Line* had been ruled out. After all, the factory on which Bean trains his knowing lens is ailing, its weaknesses set to be exposed when a thriving Bradford sister-outfit suffers a cock-up one night and Hull has to bake enough bread for two cities. If the ultimatum can't be met, it looks like the place will be shut down. And between the men and success stand a jammed oven and a double-dealing colleague.

As Jerome K Jerome rightly asserted, there is nothing quite so restful as watching other people at toil and audiences like to enter alien territories whose tribal details are wonderfully exotic on stage, if not in life. In this crudely teatsug-stained canteen, you're yanked right into the needling camaraderie, the power-plays and mutual survival techniques of this hard-labouring world. Wilson establishes the divergencies with a care that attends to their different ways of smoking a cigarette.

In a superb ensemble, Sam Kelly is hilarious and touching as beaming fiftysomething Cecil, whose hen-pecked sex-starvation is betrayed in the almost magnetised prurience with which he tracks his workmates' love lives. Bean has had the inspired idea of introducing a new recruit in the shape of an impostor: a posh, tweedy weirdo from the local asylum, played with perfectly barney self-preoccupation by Christopher Campbell. He fondly imagines that he's a messenger from beyond the grave and corners each of the men in turn. The joke is that nobody is really deceived. That comedy takes a poignant turn when fellow feeling is shown for this inadequate by Mark Williams's tough, unsmiling Blakely. Having spent six years in prison, he knows a fair bit about confinement and despair. Ewan Hooper, too, is immensely moving as "Nellie", the stoical, trembly old workhorse who, like the ovens he's enslaved to, would seize up and die if momentarily switched off.

The production lovingly re-evokes the decade that style forgot. I wince to admit that the clothes worn by Matthew Dunster's excellent Peter (straining cheesecloth, retina-abusing flares) is the kind of outfit your humble reviewer wore when basking on the lawns of Balliol with his now opposite number at The Daily Telegraph.

O tempora, O mores, Oy vey. PAUL TAYLOR

### DEBUT: ALISON FISKE

The Time: 1965  
The Place: the US  
The Part: Lucy Lockit in *The Beggar's Opera*



rehearsed *The Beggar's Opera* and a triple bill of two one-act plays and a monologue, Gordon Taylor booked a 40-date tour of American universities which took us through every state in the Union.

In four months we must have travelled 20,000 miles, in an old Greyhound bus. We went as far north as Washington State and as far south as the Mexican border. Frank, the driver, was from the Bronx and stuck to his job – he never came to see the performances.

The moment we'd arrive in a campus, we'd unload the set and the costumes we needed, get in, do the show, then take it all down again. Exhaustion

quickly set in and there we were in this darkened coach, thundering through the changing landscape of North America, trying to recuperate before the next destination.

We were often billeted with members of campus faculties. One couple were greatly looking forward to *The Beggar's Opera* – he was an 18th-century theatre expert and she had perfect pitch. Their only comment was "very bawdy". At Harvard we danced a tarantella on a stage made from rostra with gaps in between. People missed entrances and the set fell down. There were unforgettable moments, such as when we saw Charlie Mingus bashing the lights out in a New York night-club because he was annoyed with the manager.

As a way of seeing America, it was great. As a way to develop as an actor, I'm not so sure.

Six months later, after some considerable re-rehearsal and by great good fortune, we were back in New York to do an off-off-Broadway production of *The Beggar's Opera* and two plays by Harold Pinter. The Immigration Department raided us mid-performance because we were on the wrong visas. We had our fingerprints taken next day and were threatened with deportation if we didn't leave, which we did, that evening.

INTERVIEW BY DOMINIC CAVENDISH

Alison Fiske is in 'Celine' at Hampstead Theatre, London NW3 (0171-722 9301) part of 'A Small Drop of Ink', to 24 Feb

### ON THE FRINGE

THE LOST CHILD ON TOUR ■ FOURPLAY LYRIC STUDIO

JUDGED BY its intentions alone, *The Lost Child* would be declared a must-see.

The second in a trilogy of the same name by the David Glass Ensemble, it has grown out of the company's work with street children around the world.

Thousands were shown *The House of Gretel Machine*, which explored instances of abandonment through a mime version of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale, and their own answering experiences have contributed to the textless sequel.

Glass and his team – four actors, two designers and a composer Jonathan Cooper – have fashioned a black-and-white "series of dream pictures" which are as

redundant of Luis Bunuel as the acknowledged inspiration, Lewis Carroll. They are accompanied by a sound-track that bombards the car with drum-rolled gunfire, sampled gurgles, mournful loops of piano and a legion of oriental-oriental effects. But the non-specificity of *The Lost Child* gives rise to unease and confusion: images of brutalised or vulnerable youngsters are put to a metaphorical use which, while never entirely clear, seems to put the loss of innocence that comes with adulthood on a par with the traumas children can suffer at the hands of adults.

The piece takes the form of a quest conducted in and around a small proscenium

theatre. A pregnant woman (Gretel) goes through a looking-glass in search of her mirror-self and a man who beckoned her (Hansel). Her unborn baby is removed by a white-faced baldie with rabbit ears and a bandage-masked sidekick in a trench-coat and bowler hat. As creepy as the kidycatcher from *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, this sinister duo tyrannise the children who live beneath the stage where they spend much time committing solvent abuse or blowing up polystyrene dolls, depending on how you look at it. You can't fault Glass's inventiveness – there are some striking coups de théâtre with masks and fairy-lights – but, repeated

in combinations that defy decoding, they leave the audience stranded. So much emphasis is placed on structure that it ends up looking hollow.

In *Sergi Belbel's* interestingly flawed anti-farce *Fourplay*, directed by Hans-Peter Kellner, an elaborate formalism is deployed to point up an inner emptiness.

In 38 brief, cut-up scenes, punctuated by cheesy incidental music, we are teased about what goes on when a sexless married couple bring two friends (male and female) together, with the bizarre motive of inaugurating their new bed. How much "action" takes place is thrown into question when suggestive

scenes are repeated with more context: what might have been a lesbian embrace proves to be a slip-up on a pool of vomit; the smell of sex becomes the odour of tobacco puffed by Belbel's miserable quartet. The Catalan playwright has been compared with Pedro Almodóvar, but the neurosis on display here is skin-deep, used to make points about consumerism and entertainment that would have been better served with less contrivance.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

*'The Lost Child'*, Birmingham Mac, Fri/Sat, (0121-449-3838) then tours; *Fourplay*, Lyric Hammersmith (0181-741 2311) to 20 Feb

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# No one asks 'what happened to you?'

## I WORK FOR...

YVONNE WAFT WORKS FOR JAMES RYE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MARKETING FOR SCOPE, THE CHARITY FOR PEOPLE WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

I became a wheelchair user at 19, and noticed how people suddenly treated me like a child. As a disabled woman in society I don't often feel understood, but working here means that I don't need to explain myself.

I'm not seen as a tragic, helpless cripple and no one asks "Oh dear, what happened to you?"

I've been refused jobs in the past for various spurious reasons. I would apply for a job as a telephonist, for example, have a three-minute interview and then be told that the job was going to someone more "experienced". For a while I worked for the Corporation of London, as secretary to the access officer for people with disabilities. However, outside my department, there were some old-fashioned views; to some people the fact that I was disabled and female put me down among the vermin.

The staff here are very friendly, relaxed and equality minded, partly because they've done disability awareness courses. As PA to the assistant director of Scope I've got a reasonably elevated position, and it's nice not to be in a situation where I am looked down on as a disabled person who's lucky to have got herself a job at all.

When Glenn Hoddle made his statement about the disabled, the phones at Scope started buzzing with people calling us for comment. It was quite exciting because it gave us an opportunity to put across the fact that Scope is working at challenging prejudices like this on a daily basis. I was pleased that we were now able to talk about it. There are so many people with disabilities who play sport, particularly kids, that it's all the more inappropriate for a prominent sportsperson to make a comment like that. I was impressed by how on the ball Tony Blair was; it's quite rare for a prime minister to take a stand like that.

When I first heard Hoddle's statement, the first thought I had was "what a silly sod". But I wasn't really shocked, because I had studied the fears and prejudices about disability that you can detect in the undercurrent of popular opinion as part of my degree in psychology, which I completed last year. People often ask what you have done to deserve it and disability is often associated with disfigurement, ugliness and badness - prime examples being *The Phantom of the Opera*, Freddie Kruger, Captain Hook and Richard III. But assuming that disability is a punishment implies that



When Yvonne Waft heard Glenn Hoddle's remarks about disability she was not shocked because they reflect attitudes she has studied

Andrew Buurman

it must be an entirely bad experience, which in my opinion is quite untrue. I've got a first-class degree and a job, I drive around, I go swimming, and I got married last year.

My husband, however, was outraged by Hoddle's remark; I guess he felt defensive and protective over me. When people argue that Hoddle should have freedom of speech I wonder whether they would feel the same way had he claimed that black people deserved slavery, or Jews the Holocaust. I

wonder what Hoddle thinks he did in his past life to deserve the punishment he's receiving now?

A lot of people working at secretarial level here have degrees; I don't know whether it's specific to Scope or is in tune with society in general. However most of my colleagues are happy to be here, largely because working for a charity is so rewarding. My job includes a lot of telephone work and I also liaise with the advertising agency, particularly about product placement, which is

very important for us. For example, you will notice there's a Scope charity box on the bar in *EastEnders*. Before working here I knew very little about Scope, except for the fact that it used to be called the Spastics Society. But I subscribed to *Disability Now*, which turned out to be edited by one of my bosses here. Ironically, I have become a bit of a regular fixture in the magazine myself, especially on the subject of discrimination.

I have a relaxed relationship with

James; he is very easy-going and doesn't make it difficult for me to do the things I want to do, and he often asks my opinion.

Sometimes I wonder whether I am coping out by working for a charity for the disabled. But I can also see the potential for moving upwards within this environment, getting increasingly involved in research and the politics of disability. I'm terribly turned on by ideas and would like to do a PhD or move into clinical psychology training. I

think people often don't understand me because I tend to think academically, particularly on the subject of disability. As a result I sometimes get frustrated with people in the real world. But academics earn little, my husband's pay as a primary school teacher is basic and I've yet to pay off a student loan, so I think I'll stay here for a while; besides, I enjoy the sense of achievement that comes from indirectly helping people.

INTERVIEW BY

KATIE SAMPSON

## He came in a loincloth to brighten my birthday

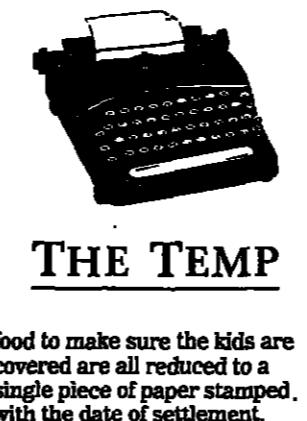
SO WHAT'S the worst day of the year to be a temp? Your birthday. What's worse than that? When your birthday is the day after Valentine's and no one sends you a card for either. When it also happens that your birthday is a Monday, you're scraping dangerously close to the nether regions of the barrel. Except when you spend the day filing paid bills in the basement of a huge, faceless service-provider.

I'll say this now: I hate filing. It's one of those things that, in normal jobs, I force myself to do first thing every morning for five minutes so that I don't have to spend time dreading it. I have been reduced to tears by the task. The combination of

mundanity, repetition and paper cuts is enough to make the toughest soul crumble. I have fantasies of hardened policemen, who have presided without a flicker over murdered children, rape victims and motorway pile-ups, sobbing as they pull out the same cardboard wallet for the seventh when the time for paperwork comes.

I know dentists are supposed to have the highest suicide rate in the country, but I'm sure that this is because no one has ever bothered to check the rates among filing clerks. This particular job has all the exquisite boredom of waiting for a Virgin train, for every piece of paper is the same as the last

save for the figures and the name at the top. Sometimes, a curious filing clerk can find interest from reading as they file, building up pictures of lives and events that, though they have been reduced in the final stage to dusty, dog-eared official documents, were once moments of great drama to the participants. Not here. Copies of bills that have been paid give no indication of the grief that settling them will have entailed. The wives who found out about their husbands' gambling when they received a red bill, the shared households that split under the pressure of settling individual responsibility, the single mums going without



### THE TEMP

food to make sure the kids are covered are all reduced to a single piece of paper stamped with the date of settlement.

Come lunchtime, I decide to take a break even though it means forgoing the extra £4.25. Some birthday. So I head to the

nearest greasy spoon for beans on toast and a Mars bar. Buy a magazine and read an interview with one of those gloriously successful women who has never had an urge to eat five Mars bars in succession and wash them down with a tin of Coke. Eat my beans as she confesses that she's about to turn 30. "I feel fine about it," she says. "You have to learn to be happy about your stage in life, or life will always be too much for you. And anyway," she continues, "I love birthdays. I always take the day off, and spend it being pampered. I have a massage, a steam bath and a facial, and give the time over to reflecting on where I am, what I have

achieved in the past year and what I intend to achieve in the coming one. I find it very useful to take the time out and check that I'm still on track."

Oh, well, I think maybe that's what I ought to be doing. Let's see. I've had 28 jobs, one holiday, a zillion cigarettes, had my shoes reheded twice, and discovered that none of my friends cares that it's my birthday. What do I want for the coming year? To buy new shoes. To have something to say about myself at parties that doesn't make people glaze over and go in search of the drinks. To get a job: a real one, with payed holidays, sick leave, a desk of my own, colleagues who knew it was my

birthday. Lord, how I'd love that.

When I can't spin my stewed tea out any longer, I wander through the streets to the grim concrete edifice that is Electrical Holdings plc. In the basement, there's some giggling and staring going on when I walk in. I pick up another sheaf of paper and start sorting them alphabetically, when Brenda comes over. "Is it your birthday or something?" she says. I brighten instantly. Someone cares after all. "Yes. How did you know?" They all burst out laughing. "You had a singing telegram while you were out," she says. "Tarzanagram, he was, in a loincloth. Said to tell you he'd be back at five o'clock."

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## NEW FILMS

### DON'T GO BREAKING MY HEART (PG)

Director: Will Patterson  
Starring: Anthony Edwards, Jenny Seagrove  
So how bad is *Don't Go Breaking My Heart*? Well, first off, it wastes the skills of *Er's* Anthony Edwards as a Yankee sports therapist adrift in Blighty. Secondly, it overplays the supposed charms of Jenny Seagrove as the widowed mum he gets together with. This anique of a romantic weenie wheezes towards a finale so predictable that you'd have to be dead not to see it coming. *West End: ABC Shakesbury Avenue, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### I THINK I DO (15)

Director: Brian Sloan  
Starring: Alexa Arquette, Christian Madsen  
Ah, the wedding caper. An excuse for reunions, for an ensemble cast, for the tension of etiquette against emotion. Writer-director Brian Sloan ticks all the right boxes during this sly baby-boomer outing, but it's too hyperactive and ingratiating for its own good. *West End: ABC Shakesbury Avenue*

### JACK FROST (PG)

Director: Troy Miller  
Starring: Michael Keaton, Mark Addy  
The respective trajectories of two stars meet for an instant in this out-of-season Yuletide tale. On the way down goes Michael Keaton as a self-absorbed bluesman who dies and then gets reincarnated as a snowman. And on the way up is *The Full Monty's* Mark Addy as his salt-of-the-earth best mate. They meet, they pass, and formula fun is had by all. *West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (LA VITA E BELLA) (PG)

Director: Robert Benigni  
Starring: Robert Benigni, Nicoletta Braschi  
See *The Independent Recommends*, right. *West End: Barbican Screen, Curzon Mayfair, Odeon Kensington, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas*

### MADELINE (12)

Director: Daisy Von Scherler Mayer  
Starring: Frances McDormand, Nigel Hawthorne  
All aboard for storybook *Filles Paris*. That gingerbread house on the corner is the boarding school attended by nine-year-old Madeline (Hatty Jones). That hatchet-faced woman out front is the strict instructor (Frances McDormand). That car going by is a Cirque. You get the picture. This overcooked rendering of Ludwig Bemelmans' kids' stories looks a shade one-dimensional; all artistry and no art. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas*

### MY GIANT (PG)

Director: Michael Lehmann  
Starring: Billy Crystal, Gheorghe Muresan  
Billy Crystal plots his way through Michael "Heathers'" Lehmann's Lilliputian comedy about a baseball Hollywood agent who gets a few life lessons when he runs into a saintly giant (Gheorghe Muresan) in Romania. Expect size jokes in the middle, and glib morals at the end. *Local: Action Park Royal, Warner Village, Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12, Feltcher Cineworld the Movies, Harrow Warner Village*

### YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS (18)

Director: Neil Labute  
Starring: Ben Stiller, Jason Patric  
Another troubling X-ray of American mores from *In the Company of Men* director Neil Labute. *Your Friends and Neighbours* widens its focus a little, yet in all other respects this looks like a carbon copy of Labute's debut. There are the same stage-bound confines, the same structured misanthropy, the same dense weave of dialogue. Two features in, and Labute has chewed this bone to bits already. *West End: Curzon Soho, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Renoir, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket. And local cinemas*

Xan Brooks

## GENERAL RELEASE

### ANTZ (PG)

Computer-animated trifle about a worker ant (voiced by Woody Allen) who tries to break out of his totalitarian rut. *West End: Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

In the follow-up to *Babe*, knockabout comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleak animatronic fairytale. *West End: Barbican Screen, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema. Local: Edmonton Lee Valley UCI 12, Richmond Odeon Studio. Repertory: National Film Theatre*

### A BUG'S LIFE (U)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: ABC Rutherford Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas*

### MULAN (U)

This animated feature about a girl who disguises herself as a soldier to spare her ailing father from the certain death of combat is one of the most visually innovative movies that Disney has ever made. *West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Ritzy Cinema. And local cinemas*

### THE OPPOSITE OF SEX (18)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### PECKER (18)

Trash suture John Waters swerves into summer streets with Pecker, his fluffily satirical tale of an amateur Baltimore photographer who is adopted as a fly-on-the-wall artist by the New York elite. Pecker goes big on blue-collar kitsch without ever making any real, stringent point. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Metro, Odeon Camden Town, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema, Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas*

### T (12)

What sustains the film is the ingenuity of its central conceit: its ongoing "mathematics is the language of nature" mantra and too-cool-for-school demeanour. *West End: ABC Panton Street, Odeon Mezzanine*

### ENEMY OF THE STATE (15)

Will Smith and Gene Hackman star in this big, noisy and effectively claustrophobic conspiracy thriller. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas*

### HIDEOUS KINKY (15)

Through the backdrop of 1970s Morocco treads Kate Winslet's hippie single-mum with her two daughters (Bella Rizzo, Carrie Mullens). Meanwhile, gormless backpackers, Sun teachers and Said Taghmaoui's love-interest weave across the narrative. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Curzon Minima, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Renoir, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. Repertory: Phoenix Cinema, Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas*

### SAVING PRIVATE RYAN (15)

Steven Spielberg's Second World War drama featuring Tom Hanks and harsh, devastating battle sequences. *West End: Plaza*

### HILARY AND JACKIE (15)

Foll-throttle playing from Rachel Griffiths and Emily Watson sustains Anand Tucker's warts-and-all biopic of the Du Pré sisters. *West End: Chelsea Cinema, Curzon Soho, Odeon Swiss Cottage. Repertory: Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas*

### HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK (15)

Stella got her groove back by taking off to Jamaica with her feisty buddie (Wendy Goldberg), sashaying around in a bikini and getting herself a little love action in the form of a man young enough to be her son. Essentially this is Shirley Valentine with an Afro-American spin. *West End: Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### LITTLE VOICE (15)

Timid Jane Horrocks perfects strident Shirley Bassey/Judy Garland impersonations. Bracing black comedy, Horrocks' vocal pyrotechnics, plus a marvellously weighted turn from Michael Caine push it through to the final curtain. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas*

### TWO GIRLS AND A GUY (18)

Heather Graham and Natasha Gregson Warner are the duped girlfriends of Robert Downey Jr's love-prata prima donna. *Two Girls and a Guy* gives them plenty of room to move and breathe, turning the yarn into a pungent acting showcase. *West End: Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket*

### VERY BAD THINGS (18)

Peter Berg's debut serves up swaggering gross-out comedy in a *Loud-magazine* style, but it's ultimately a film with nowhere to go. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Marble Arch, Plaza, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### LIVING OUT LOUD (15)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas*

### THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG)

This gaudy swashbuckler gallops full-speed

## THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

### THE FIVE BEST FILMS

#### Life is Beautiful (La Vita è Bella) (PG)

Roberto Benigni directs and stars in this tragicomic fable about an Italian Jew who tries to shield his boy from the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp by pretending that the brutal regime is an elaborate game.

#### Shakespeare in Love (15)

This enjoyable romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the creative inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow head a multi-star cast.

#### Living Out Loud (15)

Holly Hunter plays a Manhattan woman who, left by her husband, befriends the elevator operator in her building. Writer Richard LaGravenese handles everything with affectionate restraint.

#### A Bug's Life (U)

More child-friendly than *Anz*, this animated feature spins another enjoyable yarn about an ant colony and its battle to survive. Kevin Spacey provides the voice of the chief grasshopper.

#### The Opposite of Sex (18)

Christina Ricci (right) plays a 16-year-old bitch-on-wheels Dede, who causes all kinds of havoc when she moves in with her half-brother (Martin Donovan).

ANTHONY QUINN

### CINEMA

#### WEST END

#### ABC PANTON STREET

#### ABC PICCADILLY

#### ABC SHAFTEY'S

#### ABC SWISS CENTRE

#### ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD

#### ABC WEST END

#### CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE

#### COMEDY

#### CINEMA

**HOLLOWAY**  
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Holloway Road/Archway A Bug's Life 12.05pm, 12.30pm, 1.05pm, 2.20pm, 2.40pm, 3.25pm, 4.35pm, 4.50pm, 5.45pm, 6.50pm, 8.05pm, 9.05pm. Don't Go Breaking My Heart 12.10pm, 2.25pm, 4.40pm, 6.55pm, 9.05pm. Enemy of the State 8.35pm. How Stella Got Her Groove Back 5.55pm, 8.20pm. Jack Frost 12.15pm, 2.20pm, 4.25pm, 6.30pm. Little Miss Sunshine 12.10pm, 2.05pm, 4pm. Shakespeare in Love 12.20pm, 3.05pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm. Stepmom 12.00pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.25pm

**ILFORD**  
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Gants Hill A Bug's Life 11.40am, 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm. Don't Go Breaking My Heart 11.30am, 1.45pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 7.00pm, 8.40pm. Little Voice 1.40pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm. Madeline 1.20pm, 3.20pm. The Prince of Egypt 11.35am, 12.45pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 12.10pm, 2.50pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm. Stepmom 5.30pm, 8.10pm

**KILBURN**  
THE TRICICLE (0171-328 1000) ♦ Kilburn Hideous Kinky 6.30pm, 8.45pm. The Prince of Egypt 1.30pm, 4pm

**KINGSTON UPON THAMES**  
ABC OPTIMUS (0870-9020409) ♦ BR: Kingston A Bug's Life 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm. Jack Frost 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm. Little Voices 8.50pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.10pm, 2.50pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. Stepmom 2.10pm, 2.50pm, 8.10pm

**MUSWELL HILL**  
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Highgate A Bug's Life 12.10pm, 1.40pm, 4.50pm, 7pm, 9.05pm. Madeline 12.35pm, 2.25pm, 4.15pm. Shakespeare in Love 12.55pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. Stepmom 6.05pm, 8.35pm

**PECKHAM**  
PREMIER (0181-235 3006) BR: Peckham Ry Antz 12.10pm A Bug's Life 12noon, 2.20pm, 4.40pm, 7pm, 9.05pm. Don't Go Breaking My Heart 5pm, 5.25pm, 8pm. Enemy of the State 9.05pm. How Stella Got Her Groove Back 8.35pm. Jack Frost 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.20pm. Shakespeare in Love 4.05pm, 6.40pm, 9.15pm. Switchblade Sisters 9.55pm

**PURLEY**  
ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley A Bug's Life 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm. How Stella Got Her Groove Back 8.35pm. Jack Frost 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.20pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.10pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

**RICHMOND**  
ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Richmond A Bug's Life 12.10pm, 2.30pm, 4.50pm, 7.10pm, 9.30pm. Little Voices 2.40pm, 6.50pm, 9.20pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.10pm, 3.20pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm

**ODEON STUDIO** (08705 050007) BR: Richmond Don't Go Breaking My Heart 1.30pm, 4pm, 7pm, 9.20pm. Hilary and Jackie 6.30pm, 9.10pm. Madeline 12.30pm, 2.50pm. The Prince of Egypt 2.10pm, 4.20pm. Stepmom 2.10pm, 6pm, 8.50pm. Your Friends And Neighbors 5pm, 7.25pm, 9.45pm

**ROMFORD**  
ABC (0870-9020419) BR: Romford A Bug's Life 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm. Bulwark 6.45pm. Don't Go Breaking My Heart 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm. Little Voices 8.45pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.15pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm

**RUTHERFORD**  
ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Rutherford A Bug's Life 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm. Jack Frost 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Little Voices 8.45pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.10pm, 3.20pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm

**SHREWDEN**  
BELL-VUE (0181-830 0822) ♦ Willedean Green/Bollywood Film phone for times A Bug's Life 2pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm. Switchblade Sisters 9.55pm

**WIMBLEDON**  
ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Wimbledon A Bug's Life 1.10am, 1.45pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm. Don't Go Breaking My Heart 2.05pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm. Little Voices 6.30pm, 8.50pm. Madeline 12noon, 2.10pm, 4.25pm. The Parent Trap 1.10pm, 3.25pm, 5.35pm, 8.40pm. Little Voices 6.30pm, 8.50pm. Stepmom 1.20pm, 3.20pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

**WELL HALL**  
CORONET (0181-850 3351) BR: Eltham A Bug's Life 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm. Bulwark 8.55pm. Jack Frost 2pm, 4.30pm, 6.45pm.

**WILLESDEN**  
BELLE-VUE (0181-830 0822) ♦ Willedean Green/Bollywood Film phone for times A Bug's Life 2pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm. Switchblade Sisters 9.55pm

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**WILLOWICK**  
CORONET (0181-854 5043) BR: Willowick Arsenal A Bug's Life 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm. Madeline 12noon, 2.10pm, 4.25pm. The Parent Trap 1.10pm, 3.25pm, 5.35pm, 8.40pm. Little Voices 6.30pm, 8.50pm. Stepmom 1.20pm, 3.20pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm

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**WIL**



The WEDNESDAY REVIEW  
The Independent 17 February 1989

## BBC1

## BBC2

## ITV Carlton

## Channel 4

## Channel 5

**ROBERT HANKS**

## TELEVISION REVIEW



ART IS LIKE A weed: leave it to grow by itself and, before you know it, it's taken over the whole garden. Last night's *Close Up* film (BBC2) on collectors of modern art, featured some people whose lives had been taken over by art, who had allowed Gilbert and George's 'sheer white on white' to smother the gardens of everyday existence. Just these overgrown patches were nothing compared with the jungles unearthing in journeys into the Outside, as student Cocker (CA). As an art student at St. Martin's, Cocker became dismayed by what he saw as the divorce between art and life, and got interested in the notion of 'outsider art' - art produced beyond the confines of the art world by people creating because they needed to, not because they had been taught to. He wrote a dissertation on the subject, which got the second 'set night' programme, the first of three, devoted to Cocker's outsider art on a monumental scale. The 'Rockers Sculptors' consist of 300 faces and figures carved out of the rocks on the sea shore near St. Ives (10 years ago by a retired postman, Buck, aged 80) and dent Easter Island heads, straggling out of the neck and arm, having been erected by tourists and the sea, finally melting back into it. Then on to the house of Robert Vasen - a single glint mosaic, the vase filled with fountains. In order to carry more shards and sensibles in bizarre, crude pictures and patterns, Cocker visited Bodiam Lighthouse next, the favour of weeds - which may not be pretty, but are chock full of life.

ROBERT HANKS

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